

The background of the cover is a close-up, textured embroidery of the United States flag. It features a large white star on a blue field to the left, and red and white stripes to the right. The embroidery has a distinct, raised texture.

**2005  
SHAWNEE  
COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN**

**CITY OF SHAWNEE, OKLAHOMA**



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# CONTENTS

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

Comprehensive Planning authority	1-2
Why Should Shawnee Plan?	1-2
Intended Use of the Shawnee Plan	1-3
Development of the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan	1-4
A Continuous Planning Process	1-5
Essential Aspects of a Comprehensive Plan	1-6
Organization of the Shawnee Plan	1-7

## **CHAPTER 2: COMMUNITY PROFILE**

Introduction	2-1
Early Shawnee	2-1
Demographics	2-3
Economics	2-15
Incorporated city	2-18
Internet Resources	2-20

## **CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY VISION**

Introduction	3-1
The Vision Statement	3-2
Planning Goals	3-3

## **CHAPTER 4: LAND USE**

Introduction	4-1
Key Land Use Issues	4-2
Land Use Goals	4-3
Land Use Objectives & Actions	4-4
Existing Land Use & Development	4-7
Land Use Projections	4-13
Future Land Use Plan	4-17
Future Land Use Policies	4-29

## **CHAPTER 5: HOUSING**

Introduction	5-1
Key Housing Issues	5-2
Housing Goals	5-3
Housing Objectives & Actions	5-4
Summary of Market Dynamics	5-8

## **CHAPTER 5: HOUSING (CONTINUED)**

Housing Projections	5-10
Improving Housing Stock	5-11
Improving Neighborhoods	5-23

## **CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION**

Introduction	6-1
Key Transportation Issues	6-1
Transportation Goals	6-4
Transportation Objectives & Actions	6-4
Existing Transportation System	6-8
The Master Thoroughfare Plan	6-11

## **CHAPTER 7: IMAGE & DESIGN**

Introduction	7-1
Key Image & Design Issues	7-2
Image & Design Goals	7-3
Image & Design Objectives & Actions	7-3
Establishing Image	7-8
Citywide Considerations	7-24
Concepts for Character Districts	7-26
Other Design Considerations	7-31

## **CHAPTER 8: GROWTH CAPACITY**

Introduction	8-1
Key Growth Capacity Issues	8-2
Growth Capacity Goals	8-3
Growth Capacity Objectives & Actions	8-3
Constraints to Growth	8-6
Preferred Residential Development	8-9
Sensible Growth	8-11
Community Capacity	8-14
City Planning, Regional Thinking	8-17

## **CHAPTER 9: IMPLEMENTATION**

Introduction	9-1
Implementation Recommendations	9-2
Plan Maintenance	9-5
Implementing the Plan	9-7
2005 Strategic Implementation Plan	9-8



# CHAPTER ONE

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is an official public document that will serve as a blue print for future development in the community. The plan will be a tool, utilized by the community, to guide future growth in an appropriate and desired manner and improve the quality of life of its residents. The Plan serves as a guide for policy decisions relating to the physical growth and economic development of Shawnee. In addition to providing a vision, goals and objectives to work toward the Year 2020, the Plan assesses the opportunities and challenges facing the City, identifies important policies and strategies, and establishes priorities for an aggressive implementation program that emphasizes specific actions and practical results.

This Plan updates the City's current comprehensive plan, which was adopted in 1993 and updated in 1995 and 2001, and will be coordinated and developed in the context of other plans and studies previously prepared by the City.

The Plan is designed to acquaint the reader with the City by documenting existing conditions and characteristics while identifying the area's goals, expectations, and priorities for the 21st Century as well as specific action plans for achieving these goals. The Plan addresses the physical aspects of planning such as land use and development; transportation facilities and improvements and housing and neighborhoods. In addition, it addresses long-term policies that will guide shorter-term decisions regarding development review and approval, budgeting and fiscal management, and capital improvements programming. The Comprehensive Plan also sets the stage for more focused planning efforts, providing long-term perspective and highlighting how actions

in one area, such as the significant development north of Interstate 40, can have implications in other areas, such as land use, infrastructure and community image.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING AUTHORITY

Section 43-103 of the Oklahoma Municipal Code provides guidance with regards to comprehensive planning at the municipal level. Specifically the statute states:

*Municipal regulations as to buildings, structures and land shall be made in accordance with a comprehensive plan and be designed to accomplish any of the following objectives:*

- 1. To lessen congestion in the streets;*
- 2. To secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers;*
- 3. To promote health and the general welfare, including the peace and quality of life of the district;*
- 4. To provide adequate light and air;*
- 5. To prevent the overcrowding of land;*
- 6. To promote historical preservation;*
- 7. To avoid undue concentration of population; or*
- 8. To facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements. The regulations shall be made with reasonable consideration, among other things, as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the municipality. The governing body shall provide the manner in which regulations, restrictions and district boundaries shall be determined, established and enforced, and amended, supplemented or changed.*

*Source: Oklahoma Statutes Citationized, Title 11, Chapter 1, Municipal Code, Article XLIII, Section 43-103*

## WHY SHOULD SHAWNEE PLAN?

Local planning allows the City of Shawnee to have control over its destiny rather than simply reacting to change. Planning allows the City to proactively manage future growth and development as opposed to reacting to development proposals on a case-by-case basis without adequate and necessary consideration of community wide issues.

The process required to develop the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan may be more valuable to the community than the Plan itself, since the Plan is ultimately only a snapshot in time. The planning process involves major community decisions about how much and where growth will occur, the nature of future growth, and whether the community can afford to provide the necessary public services and





facilities to support this growth. This leads to pivotal discussions about what is "best" for the community and how everything from taxes to "quality of life" will be affected.

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan provides an opportunity for the elected and appointed officials to step back from the pressing, day-to-day issues and to clarify their ideas on the kind of community they are trying to create. The plan development process provides a chance to look broadly at programs for neighborhoods, housing, economic development and provision of public infrastructure and how these concerns may relate to one another. The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan represents a "big picture" of the City, one that can be related to the trends and interests of the broader region as well as the State of Oklahoma.

Local planning is often the most direct and efficient way to involve members of the general public in describing the community they want. The process of plan preparation provides a rare opportunity for two-way communication between citizens and local government officials as to their vision of the community and the details of how that vision is to be achieved. The Plan will result in a series of goals and policies that, ideally, will guide the City in administering development regulations; in the location, financing, and sequencing of public improvements; and, in guiding reinvestment and redevelopment efforts. The Plan also provides a means of coordinating the actions of many different departments and divisions within the City.

Reasons for planning in Shawnee include:

- ◆ To ensure adequate facilities to meet the demands of future growth and development
- ◆ To develop an efficient and effective growth pattern that reflects the values of the community
- ◆ To ensure the long-term conservation and protection of the visual image and appearance of the community
- ◆ To maintain the community's local heritage and culture
- ◆ To involve local citizens in the decision making process and reach consensus on the future vision of Shawnee and on how and where to develop
- ◆ To develop an annual work program and prioritize improvements

## **INTENDED USE OF THE SHAWNEE PLAN**

The Shawnee Plan belongs to the community and its citizens who generously offered their time and talents to create it. The ability to implement the Plan is directly correlated to the amount of citizen participation and the sense of ownership derived from the process. The Plan contains many components and serves numerous functions such as providing information, identifying existing conditions and characteristics, and establishing local governmental policies and

strategies. It is a definitive source of information regarding the existing and future conditions and characteristics of the community. By its nature, the Plan is intended to serve all interests of the community and thus offers the following benefits:

- ◆ It states the intentions of the governing bodies regarding the area's physical development and infrastructure investment, which creates a level of certainty for landowners and developers;
- ◆ It establishes local policy and provides guidance toward future growth and development, which may be utilized by the City in their decision-making;
- ◆ It identifies programs and initiatives in the form of specific statements of action, which may form a coordinated work program for the departments of the City;
- ◆ It identifies capital improvement needs and priorities, which may be utilized by City management in annual budgeting and capital programming;
- ◆ It indicates the type, scale and density of future development and coordinates improvements, which notifies the citizens of the pattern of development and its influence on private property; and,
- ◆ It serves as the blueprint for the area's future economic and physical development, which is useful to other local, State and Federal agencies engaged in the provision of programs, services and facilities.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Citizen involvement is the cornerstone of the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan. A successful plan is identified not just with the elected and appointed officials of the City who adopt it, but with the entire community and its residents who helped draft it and want to see it followed and maintained. Effective mechanisms for citizen involvement and debate are an essential part of the Shawnee planning process. Through this community involvement, the Plan incorporates the community's values in terms of quality of life, character and scale of development, urban form, aesthetic appeal, and how new development should be integrated with the existing and future urban and rural fabric. Citizen participation in the planning study includes a variety of activities for community involvement and public information, including:

- ◆ The **Shawnee Planning and Zoning Commission** and **City Commission** were involved as major participants in the plan development process through their representation on the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) as well as through regular briefings on the progress of the plan from the City. Draft elements of the comprehensive plan were forwarded to the





Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission for their review throughout the plan development process.

- ◆ Five meetings were held with a **Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee**, who provided insight and review into the plan development process by identifying the community's strengths and weaknesses, reviewing each plan element and providing input and suggestions into the planning process to ensure the Plan reflects the values and the vision for the future.
- ◆ **Key Person Interviews** were conducted with small groups of the City Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, and other key community figures, neighborhood and civic organizations, community service organizations, business and industry leaders, major landowners and developers, and other community leaders. The purpose of these small group interviews were to solicit the input of local residents concerning common perceptions, issues, problems, opportunities, constraints, assets and challenges in the City. This input was invaluable toward understanding the underlying issues and needs of the community and specifically the values and priorities of those who know best – citizens.
- ◆ A citywide **Community Forum** was held during the early stages of the planning process. The purpose of the forum was to inform citizens of the comprehensive planning process and to solicit their input on current issues, improvement needs and future priorities for implementation of the plan.
- ◆ Prior to the preparation of the Image and Design element of the Comprehensive Plan an **Image and Design Charrette** was conducted to gain local insight on the desired aesthetic appearance and image of the community. The charrette was used to prepare alternative design concepts and architectural renderings that reflect community preference for the aesthetic appearance and design of the community.
- ◆ A **Joint Workshop** was held with the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission with the purpose of reviewing and discussing each element of the Comprehensive Plan. A key task of the workshop was a "priority setting" exercise to establish an annual work program.
- ◆ The final stage of the citizen participation process included formal **Public Hearings** prior to consideration of the recommended Comprehensive Plan by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission.

## A CONTINUOUS PLANNING PROCESS

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is a principal part of the overall, ongoing planning process of the City. The Plan will serve as the basis for decisions pertaining to the development of the area, including the necessary guidance for the development ordinances, which are the tools to implement the Plan.

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan should not be considered a static document but rather the result of a continuous process to gather and evaluate information and make informed decisions based upon constantly changing conditions. The Plan is intended to be reviewed on a regular basis and updated as needed to maintain its applicability to current conditions and priorities of the City. At a minimum, the entire Plan should be revisited every five years and revised as needed to ensure that it still reflects the true values and direction of the community. However, while the Plan must be flexible to respond to changing needs, the community should remain steadfast in its vision and support for the core goals and objectives contained in the Plan.



## ESSENTIAL ASPECTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is a definitive source of information regarding the existing and future conditions and characteristics of the community. A thorough understanding of the community's past, present and future is needed to identify key issues and trends and formulate realistic goals, viable objectives, workable policies, and effective action plans. Ultimately the Plan provides a solid foundation for making informed, sound and fiscally responsible decisions regarding the community's future growth and development and the adequate provision of facilities and services.

The Plan is "comprehensive" in two ways: (1) geographically, since it considers the entire city limits, and (2) by the variety of issues and elements that are evaluated simultaneously to determine the best future course. For these same reasons, the Plan is general since it cannot provide definitive answers in so many individual situations and with circumstances sure to change over time. Instead, the Plan provides a policy framework to guide numerous public and private decisions.





Some elements of the Plan are especially long-term and will become permanent factors in the ongoing development of the City, such as where roads and infrastructure will be extended, where various types of development will occur, and where property will be set-aside in perpetuity as public lands.

The Plan is optimistic and even inspirational - enough to challenge the community about its future. But it also provides clear direction through statements of action that indicate how to achieve the community's desired vision. The sign of an effective plan is when it is frequently cited at Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission meetings and regularly consulted in the business and development communities. Shawnee officials should expect and ensure that their Plan is the "road map" for City in the years ahead, providing practical guidance for every municipal function.

Finally, the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan should not be confused with zoning. Zoning is a legal mechanism enacted by the City whereby land is classified according to specified uses, whereas the Comprehensive Plan is a guide for future growth and development. Zoning is the tool utilized by the City to influence and direct the development of the community to reflect the direction and desired urban form specified by the comprehensive plan. The City's zoning ordinance is one tool used to implement the vision, goals, objectives and actions of the Comprehensive Plan.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE SHAWNEE PLAN

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is organized into nine (9) individual plan elements, which address the existing conditions, issues, goals, objectives, and action plans for various facets of the community. These elements include:

- ◆ **Chapter One: Introduction** – Outlines the purposes of comprehensive planning and background on the plan development process and associated citizen involvement activities.
- ◆ **Chapter Two: Community Profile** – Documents the existing socioeconomic conditions and characteristics of the City as well as the projected growth of the area. It includes data relating to historical, current and forecasted population and employment and local socioeconomic and demographic characteristics and trends.
- ◆ **Chapter Three: Vision and Goals** - Expresses the shared vision of what the citizens want Shawnee to be now and in the future. The vision statement is intended to provide a clear and concise summary of citizens' expectations for future development, economic opportunity, mobility, public facilities and services, recreational enjoyment, natural beauty, and other aspects of community life.
- ◆ **Chapter Four: Land Use** - Illustrates the generalized pattern of future land use, including various types and densities of

development.

- ◆ **Chapter Five: Transportation** - Delineates the functional classes of existing and proposed major thoroughfares and identifies the thoroughfare system improvement needs.
- ◆ **Chapter Six: Housing and Neighborhoods** - Summarizes issues and findings related to housing availability and affordability. Identifies specific ways the City can promote needed housing development and redevelopment and ensure viable and sustainable neighborhood environments. Projects future housing requirements over the next 20 years.
- ◆ **Chapter Seven: Community Image and Design** – Identifies strategies, policies and programs to improve and enhance the aesthetic appearance and design of the community.
- ◆ **Chapter Eight: Growth Capacity** – Establishes growth constraints and opportunities and compares them with projected future demand. Identifies development practices that can aid in enhancing the physical, social, environmental and financial condition of the community.
- ◆ **Chapter Nine: Implementation** - Includes specific actions that are linked to the goals and objectives of each of the plan elements; the timeframe for implementation; and the agency/entity responsible for implementation.





# CHAPTER TWO

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

### INTRODUCTION

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The purpose of the Community Profile is to provide a snap shot view of the Shawnee community. This section will provide insight into the historical trends of population, housing, and economic activity and project growth into the future. This data serves as the backbone of the entire document. The trends and projections are used to forecast land use needs over the years to come. Other reference sites are provided at this section for more in-depth analysis.

The 2000 US Census is the source of most of the data provided in this section. However, as of this time the exact figures have not been released by the Census Bureau. This demographic analysis of Shawnee and the area are based on statistical samplings, and extrapolated to represent the entire population. Once released, the data will validate or cause reconsideration of assumptions upon which this Plan relies.

Comparison data is provided for four communities in Oklahoma, which are of similar size and character to Shawnee. The cities include Ardmore, Ponca City, Bartlesville and Muskogee.

### EARLY SHAWNEE

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The area surrounding Shawnee was settled after the Civil War by a number of tribes that the federal government had removed to Indian Territory. The Sac and Fox originally were deeded land in the immediate area but were soon followed by the Kickapoo, Shawnee and Pottawatomie Indians. Members of the tribes continue to reside in and around Shawnee today.

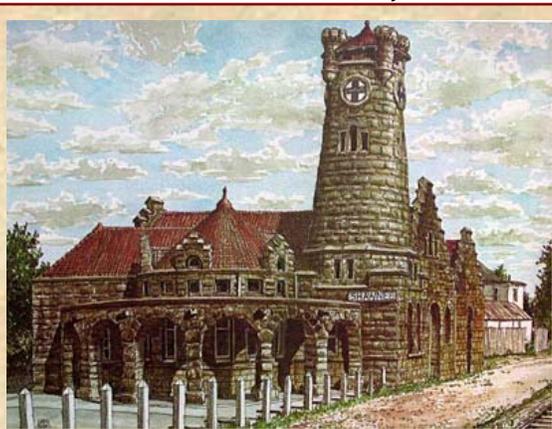


Several structures from an earlier era remain in downtown Shawnee

During the 1870's, Texas cattle drovers pushed their herds across Indian Territory; there were four major trails, with the West Shawnee trail crossing near present-day Kickapoo and Main Streets. Railroads were a direct result of the cattle drives, and pressure began building to allow permanent white

settlements in a region that was previously reserved by treaty for the Native Americans. Near the current Mission Mill Hospital, an old building still marks the spot where the Quaker mission was established in 1871. The founding of this mission was an event that foreshadowed the coming of the white civilization to Shawnee. That first missionary, Joseph Newsom, opened a school in 1872, and by 1876 a post office and trading post had been established a quarter mile west of the mission at what became known as Shawnee Town.

Beginning in April 1889, the US government succumbed to pressure to open Indian lands to white settlement. Land Runs were initiated after tribal property was seized and then allotted individually to tribal members. At high noon on September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1891, Etta B. Ray, John and Lola Beard, J.T. Farrall, and Elijah Ally set off for the site of present-day Shawnee. By Christmas 1891, John Beard had decided that railroads would be the key to Shawnee's success, and so with the aid of other settlers he made overtures to various railroads. The task proved considerable because Tecumseh had already been named the county seat.



The Santa Fe Depot, built in 1903, remains one of the most unique stations in the US.

Nevertheless, by the fall of 1894, the Choctaw Railroad was committed to travel through Shawnee.

Shawnee's growth was fueled by the railroad industry. By 1902, the Choctaw had been absorbed by the Rock Island, and a station was

built at the foot of Union Street. Shortly thereafter, the Santa Fe built one of the more striking stations in the entire country. The



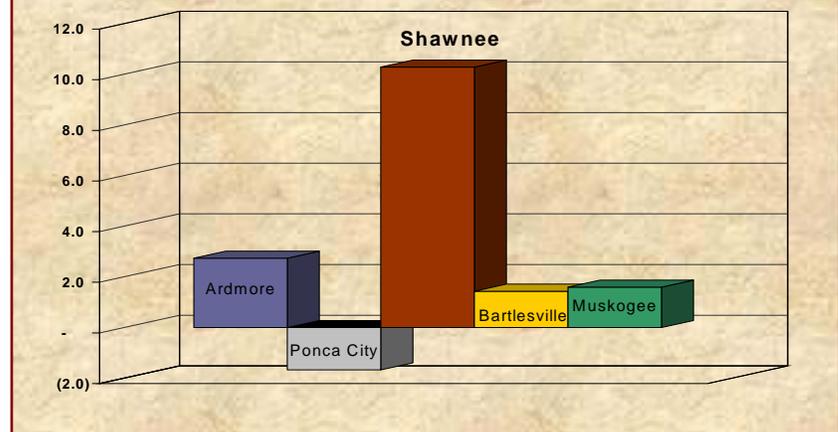


Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad, better known as the Katy Railroad, also built a station. According to the Chamber of Commerce, by 1907 there was an average of 42 passenger trains and 65 freight trains arriving in the city each day. (Source: *Shawnee – The Forgotten Hub of Central Oklahoma*)

## DEMOGRAPHICS

From 1990 to 2000, the Shawnee community experienced a boom similar to the Oklahoma City Metropolitan area. During this time, the City Commission adopted the first rehabilitation code in Oklahoma and aggressively pursued dilapidated structures and other nuisances as a means of encouraging infill development.

**Figure 2.1**  
**1990 to 2000 Population Change**



## POPULATION

According to the 2000 Census, the population for the City of Shawnee grew to 28,692. This represents a 10.3% increase from 1990, and the largest boom since the 1920's. When compared to other communities of its size, Shawnee grew more than any of the other cities. The growth pattern has continued since 2000 with single-family housing starts higher than those found in other communities. When comparing 2001 home starts data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, Shawnee was higher (62) than Ardmore (55), Ponca City (45), Muskogee (44) and Bartlesville (31). From 1996 to 2002, Shawnee averaged 66 new housing starts.

Shawnee's growth was comparable to the growth in the Oklahoma City Metro Area and the State of Oklahoma, but slightly slower than Pottawatomie County and the United States. Over the last several decades, the county has grown faster than the city; therefore, the percentage of county population living in the city limits has declined to an all-time low of 43.7 % in 2000. As the city is growing slower than the county, the State of Oklahoma is growing slower than the overall US which resulted in

the loss of a US House seat. Through the Congressional realignment, Pottawatomie County was moved from the 3rd to the 5th Congressional District which includes most of Oklahoma City, Midwest City and Edmond.

*HISTORICAL TRENDS*

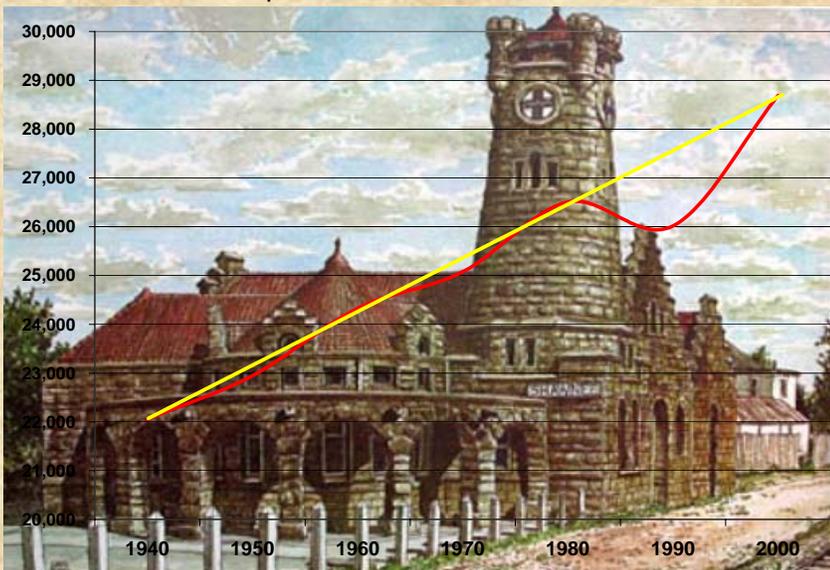
The City of Shawnee experienced more growth from 1990-2000 than it had in any decade since the “Roaring Twenties”, as indicated in *Table 2.1, Historical Population, 1900 to 2000*. With the exception of the Depression in the 1930’s and the Oil Bust in the 1980’s, the Shawnee population has grown in every decade. The building boom that the community experienced in the 1990’s compensates for the loss in population over the 1980’s, as seen in *Figure 2.2, Post World War II Population Trend*. The increased growth brings the population in accordance with what it would have been if it had grown linearly since 1940.



Table 2.1  
Historical Population, 1900 to 2000

	Shawnee			Pottawatomie Co.		Oklahoma		United States	
	Population	Change	% Co.	Population	Change	Population	Change	Population	Change
1900	3,462		13.1%	26,412		790,391		76,212,168	
1910	12,474	260.3	28.6%	43,595	65.1	1,657,155	109.7	92,228,496	21.0
1920	15,348	23.0	33.3%	46,028	5.6	2,028,283	22.4	106,021,537	15.0
1930	23,283	51.7	35.0%	66,572	44.6	2,396,040	18.1	123,202,624	16.2
1940	22,053	-5.3	40.6%	54,377	(18.3)	2,336,434	(2.5)	132,164,569	7.3
1950	22,948	4.1	52.7%	43,517	(20.0)	2,233,351	(4.4)	151,325,798	14.5
1960	24,326	6.0	58.6%	41,486	(4.7)	2,328,284	4.3	179,323,175	18.5
1970	25,075	3.1	58.1%	43,134	4.0	2,559,463	9.9	203,211,926	13.3
1980	26,506	5.7	48.0%	55,239	28.1	3,025,487	18.2	226,545,805	11.5
1990	26,017	-1.8	44.3%	58,760	6.4	3,145,576	4.0	248,709,873	9.8
2000	28,692	10.3	43.7%	65,621	11.7	3,450,654	9.7	281,421,906	13.2

Figure 2.2  
Post World War II Population Trend





*DENSITY PATTERNS*

The overall density of the City of Shawnee is 869 people per square mile. As noted in *Table 2.2, Population Density, 2000* This is over ten times the densities for Pottawatomie County, the State of Oklahoma, and the entire United States. This disparity is typical because of the nature of rural and urban areas. Shawnee has over 33 square miles within its city limits. When compared to other comparable municipalities, Shawnee isn't as dense as most. This is mostly due to the fact that approximately 13 square miles of incorporated land surrounds the Shawnee Twin Lakes and 8 square miles of undeveloped lands north of I-40 which is where most industrial facilities are located.

Table 2.2  
Population Density, 2000

	Persons per Square Mile	Dwellings per Square Mile
United States	77	32
Oklahoma	49	22
Pottawatomie	82	34
Shawnee	869	385
Ardmore	426	196
Ponca City	1,281	567
Bartlesville	1,579	731
Muskogee	958	438

Census Tract data reveals that the oldest areas of Shawnee are the densest. Each of the three Tracts has densities in excess of 3,000 people per square mile. There are pockets with the higher densities, but they are located within larger Tracts in the area. These concentration pockets include multiple apartment properties, Oklahoma Baptist University and Saint Gregory University. Both schools have significant on-campus populations.

*COUNTY DISTRIBUTION*

As mentioned earlier, the population in Pottawatomie County is growing at a more significant rate than the City of Shawnee. Over the first half century, the city population grew faster than the county, but this trend changed in 1960. The result is that the city population continues to decline as a percentage of the overall county population. The city currently makes up over 43.7% of the county population which is down slightly from 44.3% in 1990. Most of the county growth is immediately around the city limits.

*UNIVERSITY INFLUENCE*

There are approximately 2,000 students enrolled at Oklahoma Baptist University and 800 enrolled at Saint Gregory's University in the 2002-2003 school years. For many years, the two private

schools have influenced Shawnee in practically every community aspect (i.e. economically, demographically, and geographically). The number of advanced degrees is proportionately higher than non-university communities. Disposable income is higher than it would be without the universities, and inversely the median income is lower due to student incomes. One only has to visit a restaurant, the shopping mall, or a church to see the student influence during breaks in the school year. The universities influence the overall quality of life in Shawnee by offering educational and cultural opportunities. Over the years, the universities have influenced the growth patterns of Shawnee by forcing development to gravitate toward their campuses. The Abbey at St. Gregory's owns many acres surrounding their campus, and the monks' desire to live in solitude prevents urban densities in close proximity to the campus.

*EDUCATION ATTAINMENT*

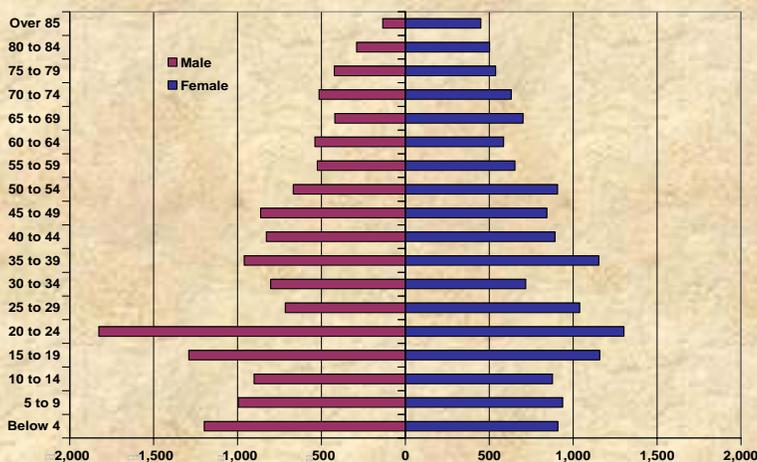
The Census Tract (8) with the highest percentage of college graduates (49% of men and 29% of women) also exhibits the highest median household income. Inversely, Tract 2, which is the poorest in Shawnee, has the lowest percentage of college graduates (2% of males and 3% of females). Overall, nineteen percent of Shawnee has a bachelor's degree or higher while nearly 78% are high school graduates. Only Ponca City and Bartlesville with their petroleum research influence had higher graduate percentages. Seven percent of Shawnee residents have graduate or professional degrees which are higher than the state, county and all but one of the comparable communities. Only Bartlesville residents have a larger percentage (11%).

*AGE*

The median age for Shawnee is 33.3 years which is the lowest among the other comparable cities, the state, 5<sup>th</sup> District and



**Figure 2.2**  
**2000 Age and Gender Distribution**





county. When compared with the cities, Shawnee has the lowest percentage (17.7) of people over 62 years old, but the percentage is higher than Oklahoma, 5<sup>th</sup> District and Pottawatomie County. This data indicates that Shawnee is aging faster than the metro area and the state, but the population is not as old as other cities of similar size and character. Most mid-sized communities in Oklahoma are growing older without the necessary younger families moving into the community to off-set the aging. This trend occurs when children grow up and move to larger communities.

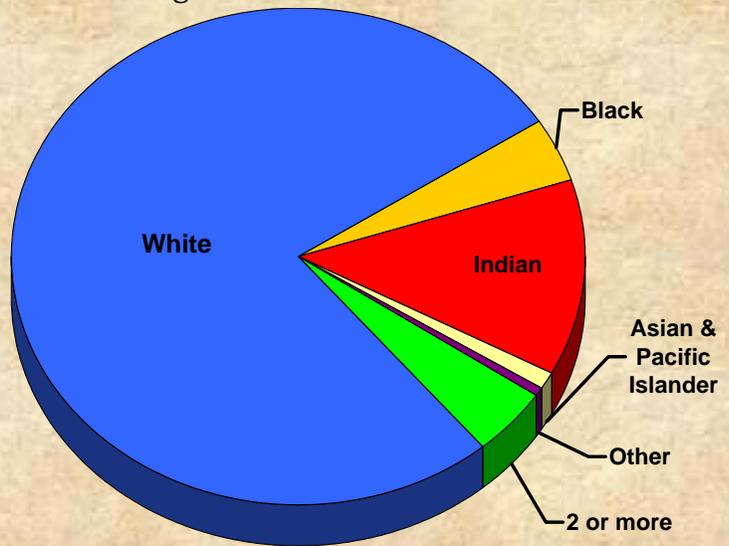
*GENDER*

As noted in *Figure 2.2, 2000 Age and Gender Distribution*, males outnumber females in every cohort under the age 25 in Shawnee. This trend quickly changes with females outnumbering males in every age cohort over 35 years of age. Males make up less than half (48.4%) of Shawnee’s population. The highest percentage of males is ages 20 to 14 (58%), and the lowest percentage is over 85 (23%). As the age of the resident increases, the female percentage of residents becomes greater.

*RACE AND ETHNICITY*

As displayed in *Figure 2.3, Shawnee According to Race, 2000*, the Shawnee community has a minority population of 23%, which is lower than both Muskogee and Ardmore. Of the similarly sized communities, Shawnee has the highest percentage of American Indians (13%), as seen in *Figure 2.4, Minority Breakdown of*

**Figure 2.3**  
**Shawnee According to Race, 2000**

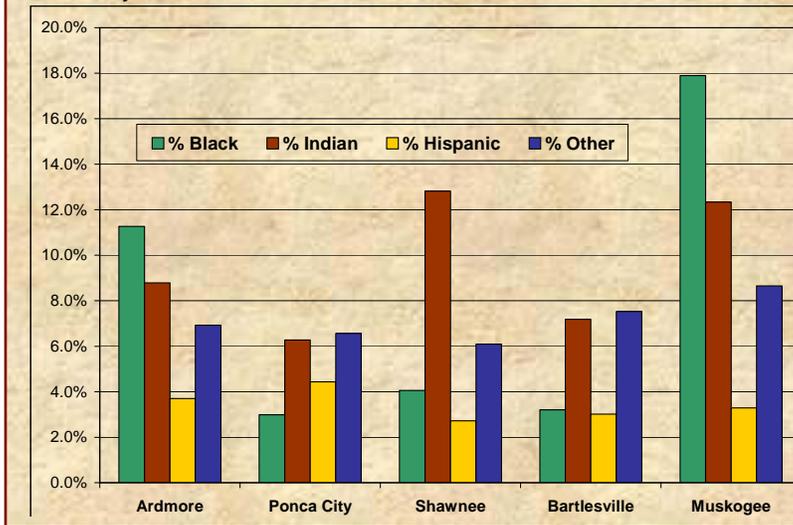


*Cities*, while having the lowest percentage of all other minority groups. Even though Shawnee constitutes less than 44% of the entire county, fifty percent of the Pottawatomie County minority population resides in Shawnee. Sixty-one percent of blacks, 62% of Asian, 50% of American Indians and 50% of Hispanics reside in

Shawnee. The American Indian population is so high in Shawnee that it constitutes 15% of all Indians in the 5<sup>th</sup> District while the



**Figure 2.4**  
**Minority Breakdown of Cities**

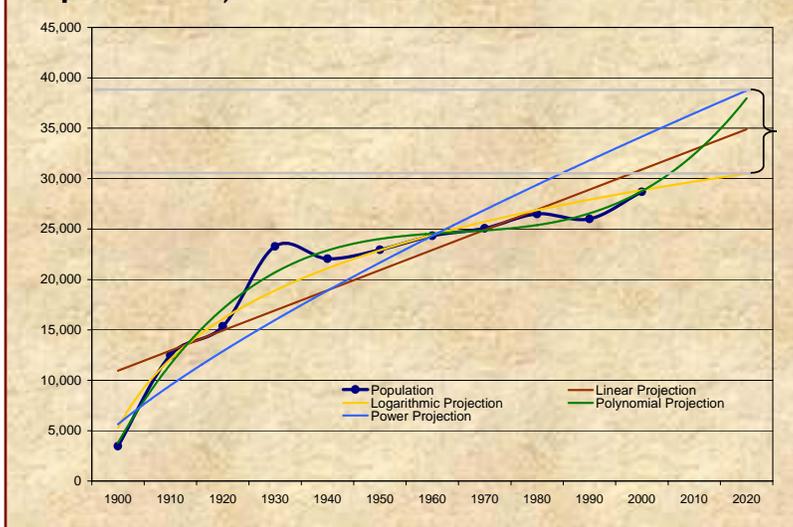


city population is only 5%. The percent of minority residents (20%) in Pottawatomie County is slightly lower than the City of Shawnee.

*POPULATION FORECAST*

Using various methods to forecast the population of Shawnee, the 2020 population could be as high as 39,000. As indicated in *Figure 2.5, Population Projections*, the 2010 population projection ranges between 30,000 and 35,000. The most likely projection method is the Polynomial Projection which follows the cyclical nature of Shawnee’s growth patterns. This projection method depicts significant growth within the next two decades (14% in ten years and 34.5% in twenty years).

**Figure 2.5**  
**Population Projections**





## HOUSING

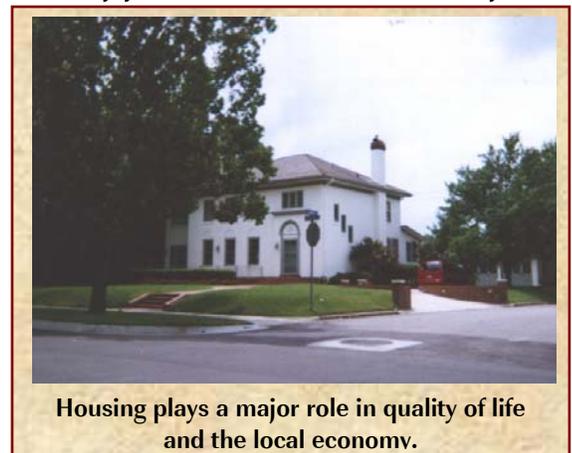
New housing starts have been extremely cyclical in Shawnee over the last thirty years, as illustrated in *Figure 2.6, New Housing Starts, 1976 to 2002*. Over the last 6 years, the average number



of starts has been 66 homes. Based on housing starts data provided by the City of Shawnee, in 2002, there were 64 new home starts which are the lowest since 1996. Shawnee has seen a growth in housing units between 1990 and 2000 of 7.4% which is the highest amongst the similar cities. The next highest city is Ardmore at 2.8% with Ponca City and Muskogee both experiencing a decline.

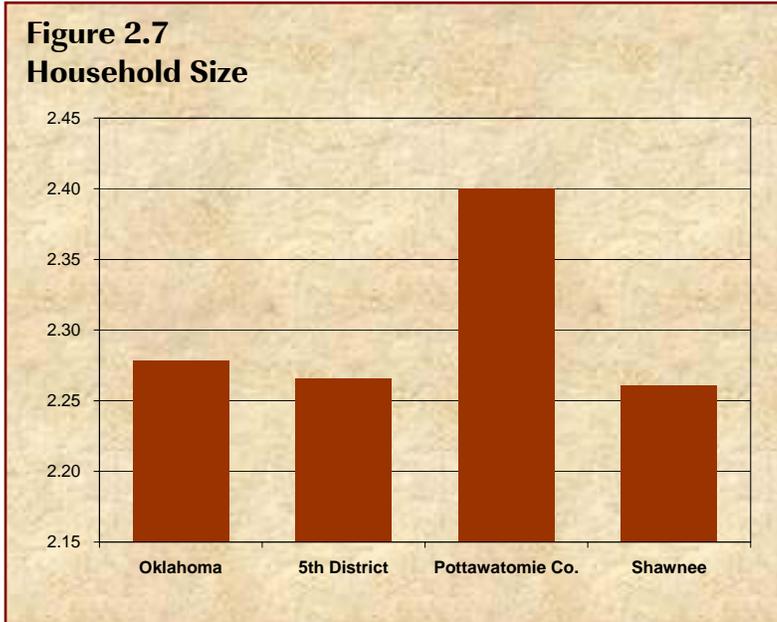
### DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

Housing development in Shawnee is very cyclical in that it follows the national and state economy. All indicators (sales tax, housing units, population, property values, etc.) have increased over time, which depicts the Shawnee community as growing and less susceptible than other Oklahoma communities to outside influences. Over the last twenty years, the Shawnee economy has diversified and become stronger in its ability to manage downturns in the economy. The proximity to the Oklahoma City market provides the ability to reach larger populations without the higher costs of operating businesses in larger cities.



HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

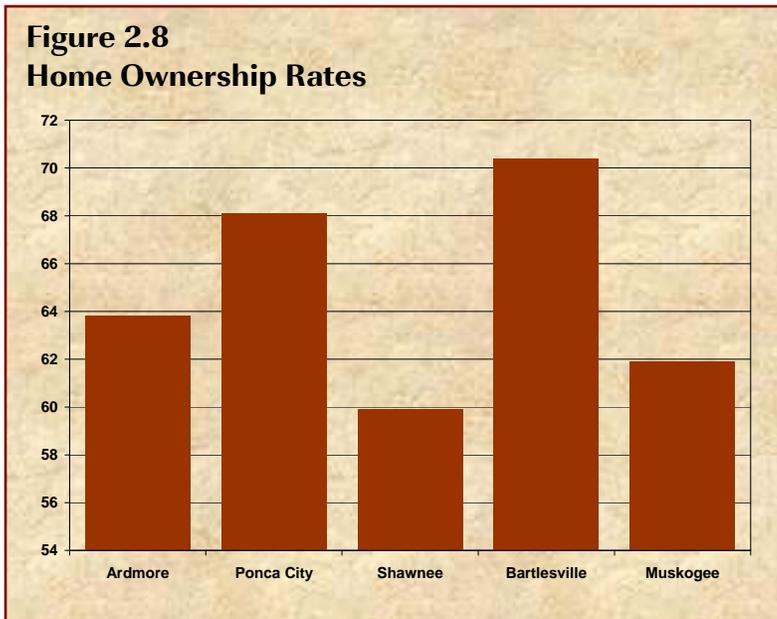
Shawnee has a larger household size when compared to similarly sized communities, as seen in *Figure 2.7, Household Size*. Since college students count as households, this statistic could be even



larger. The average household size in Shawnee is 2.27 while Muskogee households average 2.19 people. This trend is indicative of an aging community.

OWNERSHIP RATES

The homeownership rate for Shawnee has declined by as much as 5% every ten years since 1970. Of the four comparable cities



displayed in *Figure 2.8, Home Ownership Rates*, Shawnee has the lowest ownership rate (59.9%) while Bartlesville has the highest. One of the causes for this decline is increasing housing costs which have exceeded the cost-of-living for families. The houses being built in Shawnee average sales prices over \$128,000. Sixty-

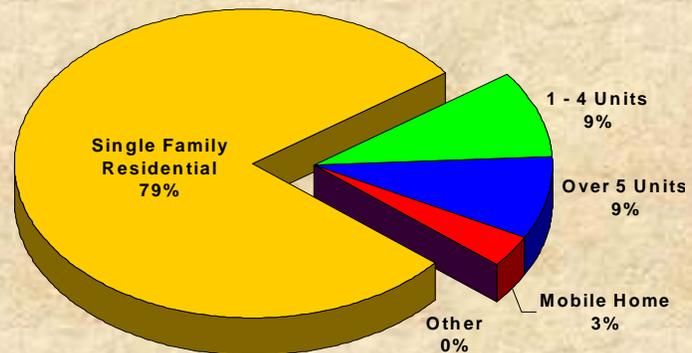


one percent of Shawnee households earn less than \$35,000 annually. The mortgage requirements for a household income of \$27,861 would allow a monthly payment of approximately \$650 excluding taxes and insurance. This would justify a mortgage of approximately \$83,000, but when property taxes or insurance are considered, the end price for a home must be around \$70,000.

#### HOUSING TYPES

An overwhelming majority of housing in Shawnee is single-family residential detached dwellings (79%). Eighteen percent of all dwellings are multi-unit dwellings (9% have below 5 units while 9% have over 5 units). Mobile homes make up 3% of all dwellings in the community, as noted in *Figure 2.9, Types of Housing in Shawnee*. The Zoning Ordinance prohibits mobile or manufactured houses from areas beyond agricultural districts, so most are in the rural areas. There is a limited number of non-conforming houses located within the urban neighborhoods. As these dwellings become uninhabitable, they will be razed and removed.

**Figure 2.9**  
**Types of Housing in Shawnee**



When compared to the other four communities, the percentage of mobile homes in Shawnee is in the middle. Muskogee (4.5%) and Ardmore (4.6%) have a larger percent of mobile home in their communities. Since mobile homes are more prominent in rural areas, the State of Oklahoma and Pottawatomie County both have larger percentages.

#### AVAILABILITY

Available 2000 Census information reflected 27,302 housing units in Pottawatomie County. This included single- and multi-family units that were owner occupied and rentals. The 2000 U.S. Census indicates 12,651 housing units in the City of Shawnee. This is an increase from 11,784 units in 1990. The increase reflects a growth percentage of 7.36%. *Figure 2.6* reflects changes in the number of building permits in the City of Shawnee since 1976.

Figure 2.6 illustrates new housing trends in the City of Shawnee during the past twenty-five years. As shown, Shawnee experienced a boom of new residential construction in the late 1970's, which was followed by many years of very modest construction as a result of the oil bust of the early 1980's. New single-family construction again picked up in the late 1990's and early 2000's, although currently construction is not quite as fast-paced as it was in the 1970's. Sixty-four new single family permits were issued in 2002. Multi-family construction in Shawnee has been sporadic, although permits for 386 new multi-family units were issued between 1996 and 1998. Most of these units represent the construction of two new Low-Income Housing Tax Credit facilities; Ashford Place and Chapel Ridge. Chapel Ridge was actually constructed in two phases, with the second phase consisting of market-rate units. Finally, Shawnee has experienced a boom of new commercial investment in the past several years. It is apparent that this new commercial investment is closely linked with current population and employment growth.

The average value of single family permits has generally fluctuated in recent years, although the general trend for the past twenty-five years has been upward. The average value in 2001 was \$101,936. With a reasonable inclusion of lot price and builder's profit (20%) this would indicate an average cost of \$122,000. However, as previously noted, it is common for builders to underestimate their construction costs. Data from the Pottawatomie County Assessor indicates that new speculative homes constructed in the City of Shawnee sell for an average of \$139,697, which is moderately higher than the previous estimate.

The City of Shawnee had a 10.28% increase in population from 1990 to 2000, but the housing stock increased by only 7.36%. Because the housing stock grew at a slower rate than the population, new households began to occupy housing units that were vacant as of the 1990 Census. There were 107 fewer vacant housing units in 2000 than in 1990 in the City of Shawnee. The homeowner vacancy rate fell from 3.8% in 1990 to 2.4% in 2000 and the renter vacancy rate fell from 13.0% in 1990 to 9.1% in 2000. Vacancy rates in the City of Shawnee are slightly higher than in comparable cities. However, the high vacancy rates may be partially attributable to the aging housing stock in the City of Shawnee. *Table 2.3, Housing Units by Year Structure Built 2000*, presents data regarding the age of Shawnee's housing stock, as reported by the U. S. Census Bureau, as well as comparable data for the State of Oklahoma.

According to the 2000 Census, almost 47% of the housing units in the City of Shawnee were constructed prior to 1960. It is reasonable to assume that a significant portion of these housing units will become severely deteriorated or dilapidated within the





next decade. If growth in housing does not keep pace with the growth in population, vacancy rates will continue to decline, leading to a significant gap between housing supply and housing demand, which translates to higher rental rates and higher housing prices.

**Table 2.3**  
**Housing Units by Year Structure Built, 2000**

	Oklahoma		Shawnee	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total:	1,514,400	100%	12,692	100%
1999 to March 2000	33,976	2.2%	257	2.0%
1995 to 1998	93,041	6.1%	625	4.9%
1990 to 1994	76,352	5.0%	392	3.1%
1980 to 1989	277,098	18.3%	1,545	12.2%
1970 to 1979	339,008	22.4%	2,479	19.5%
1960 to 1969	224,293	14.8%	1,466	11.6%
1950 to 1959	198,181	13.1%	1,921	15.1%
1940 to 1949	116,728	7.7%	1,522	12.0%
Before 1939	155,723	10.3%	2,485	19.6%

Source: US Census Bureau

Approximately 59.9% of the housing units in Shawnee are owner occupied with the remaining 40.1% renter occupied. This represents an increase in the percentage of renters in Shawnee, which is partially a result of higher enrollment at OBU and St. Gregory's University. Although much of Shawnee's multi-family rental stock is relatively older, similar to the single-family housing stock, there have also been two significant new additions to its inventory, namely Ashford Place and Chapel Ridge apartment complexes. These two facilities, constructed between 1997 and 1999, added 308 units to the Shawnee rental market, including 244 LIHTC units. The addition of these facilities has aided in meeting much of the new demand for rental housing in Shawnee.

Until 1998, the cost of new market rate apartment development was not financially feasible in Oklahoma due to low rental rates. Rental rates significantly increased in the large metropolitan areas in the late 1990's, spurring significant new rental unit development. Most new multi-family development in Oklahoma communities has been with the assistance of government support including federal tax credits. New garden developments in Oklahoma City with property amenities typically have a cost of over \$60,000 per unit. Rental rates must be high enough to justify the cost in order to support new market based development.

*DEMAND*

The increase in population in Shawnee between 1990 and 2000 represents a 10.28% increase or a .98% annually compounded increase in population. Estimated increases from 2002 to 2007 indicate growth at a slower rate. During the 1990's, the number of households in the City of Shawnee increased by 9.42%, or by .90% annually. The number of households is expected to remain stable from 2002 to 2007 according to projections from Claritas, Inc. The percentage of renter households was estimated at 59.9% with owner households estimated at 40.1% of the total city population. The estimated number of additional units needed to service increasing demand can be estimated by applying this percentage to the anticipated growth in households. It should be noted that this is an estimate of rental and owner requirements and should be relied upon only as a guideline for possible new demand.

Increases in the total number of households are estimated at 0.90% annually, which is approximately the same rate as was experienced during the 1990's. Based on current economic and real estate activity, projections of this plan appear far more reasonable than estimates generated by Claritas, which appear abnormally low. However, it is logical to assume some moderation in growth based on the cyclical nature of regional economies.

*HOUSING FORECAST*

Table 2.4, Future Housing Demand Estimates for Shawnee, reflects a necessary addition of 209 rental units and 312 ownership units in the City of Shawnee during the next five years. This is based on anticipated changes in city population and will require approximately 62 new owner occupied units and 42 rental units annually. Over the past six years, the City of Shawnee has averaged 66 new single-family residential building permits per year. Should this average remain constant over the next five years, new single-family construction should adequately supply demand for new single-family owner-occupied housing, especially for



**Table 2.4**  
**Future Housing Demand Estimates for Shawnee**

Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Household Estimates	11,378	11,480	11,584	11,688	11,793	11,899
% Owner	59.9%	59.9%	59.9%	59.9%	59.9%	59.9%
% Renter	40.1%	40.1%	40.1%	40.1%	40.1%	40.1%
Owner Households	6,815	6,876	6,938	7,001	7,064	7,127
Renter Households	4,563	4,604	4,645	4,687	4,729	4,772
<b>Total New Owner Households</b>						<b>312</b>
<b>Total New Rental Households</b>						<b>209</b>

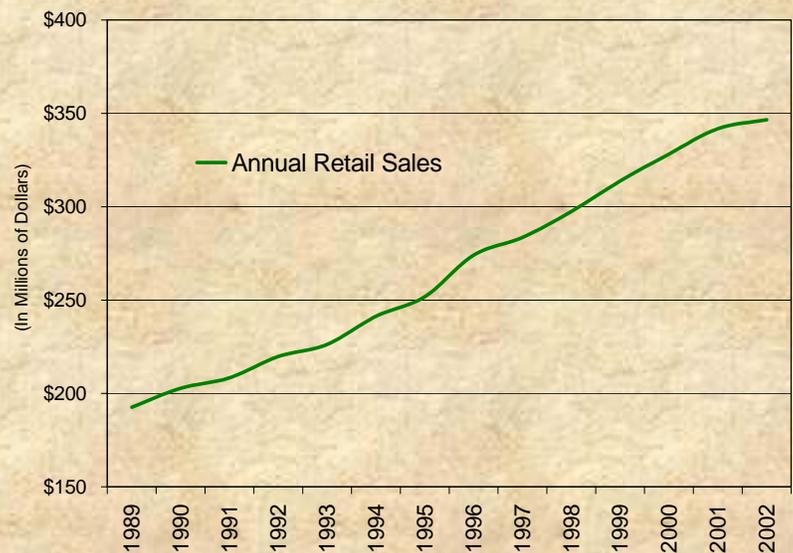


upper-income households. Furthermore, Shawnee has averaged 64 new multi-family housing units in the past six years, with all of those units constructed between 1996 and 1999. Considering current rental market vacancy, it is apparent that the current supply of rental housing should adequately meet future demand for both market rate rental property and low-income housing tax credit rental property for the next few years - perhaps through 2005.

## ECONOMICS

The Pottawatomie County area economic base is primarily concentrated in manufacturing, industry and petroleum, with Shawnee serving as the primary trade center for the county. The Pottawatomie County area is included within the Oklahoma City MSA and is strongly influenced by economic conditions in Oklahoma City. The county has experienced steady economic growth for the past decade. The Shawnee economy has grown considerably over the last 15 years. This growth is the highest since the early 1900's.

**Figure 2.10**  
**Annual Retail Sales for Shawnee**



### RETAIL SALES

Shawnee has experienced steady growth in retail sales throughout the 1990's, as indicated in *Figure 2.10, Annual Retail Sales for Shawnee*. Sales growth has slowed since 2001, which is similar to national and state trends. As commercial real estate is developed in Shawnee, continued increases in retail sales should occur. The city should recapture consumption by residents that currently travel to larger retail centers, such as those in Midwest City and Oklahoma City. Similarly, retail sales will expand as consumers from outlying communities turn to Shawnee to shop.

## INCOME

The median household income for Shawnee is 87.6% of the county's and 83% of the median for the state. Shawnee has a median household income for April 1999 of \$27,659. This value is one of the lowest in the OKC metro area. When compared to similar cities, only Muskogee had a lower income. Two statistics significantly influence this figure. One, the student population of both OBU and St. Gregory Universities artificially lower income figures. College students, in contrast, have higher disposable incomes than families. Second, there are four housing authorities operating within the corporate boundaries of Shawnee (Shawnee Housing Authority and three Indian tribes). Many occupants are brought into the community in order to provide safe and decent living conditions.

**Table 2.5**  
**Major Employers in Shawnee**

Name	Employees
Citizens Pottawatomie Nation	703
Unity Health Center (North/South)	600
Exxon-Mobil Film Division	510
Wolverine Tube	500
Shawnee Public Schools	490
Absentee Shawnees	475
Central Plastics	450
Eaton Corporation	385
TDK Ferrites	350
Oklahoma Baptist University	315
Wal-Mart	285
City of Shawnee	264
Shawnee Milling Company	260
Uponor	170
St Gregory's University	170
Al-Ko-Kober	150

## LABOR MARKET

The unemployment rate for Pottawatomie County has not climbed above 6% since 1996. Even as the economy has slowed, the unemployment rate has remained fairly steady. Historically, the rate has mirrored the state unemployment rate until 2001 when several layoffs occurred in the community, and the economy began to falter. Shawnee and Pottawatomie County are both influenced greatly by the Oklahoma City Metro. The largest employer of county residents is Tinker Air Force Base which is located 15 miles from Shawnee. Large employers are included in *Table 2.5, Major Employers in Shawnee*. The largest employer in Shawnee recently laid-off a few hundred employees, but a couple manufactures are expanding their operations and hiring employees.

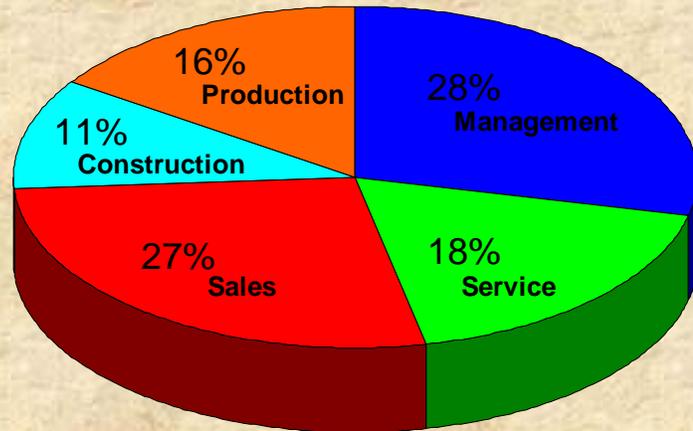




*LABOR FORCE*

The Shawnee labor force primarily consists of Management, Professional & Related occupations and Sales & Office occupations. Together they make up over 55% of the total workforce. The occupations are evenly distributed between Service, Construction and Production, as shown in *Figure 2.11, Occupations in Shawnee*. These figures are consistent with the retail sales figures for the community in that Shawnee is the regional retail hub for the area and a large number of sales related jobs are required to peddle the goods. The mean travel time to

**Figure 2.11**  
**Occupations in Shawnee**



work is 20 minutes which is the approximate commute to Tinker, so the assumption is that a lot of the management and professional residents commute into Oklahoma City and to Tinker Air Force Base.

*PROPERTY VALUE*

According to the 2000 Census, the median value of owner-occupied dwellings was \$56,400. Over 50% of home owners moved into their unit since 1998 which indicates that a high rate of turnover occurs in the Shawnee housing market. The Pottawatomie County Assessor’s office reports that the cumulative property value for the City of Shawnee has steadily grown over the last 15 years. Considerable increases occurred over the last 5 years which is consistent with building permits. The Assessor’s office indicates that new speculative homes constructed in Shawnee sell for an average of \$139,697. Commercial investment has remained consistent over the last twenty years and averaged approximately \$6,000,000 annually over the last 6 years.

*DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL*

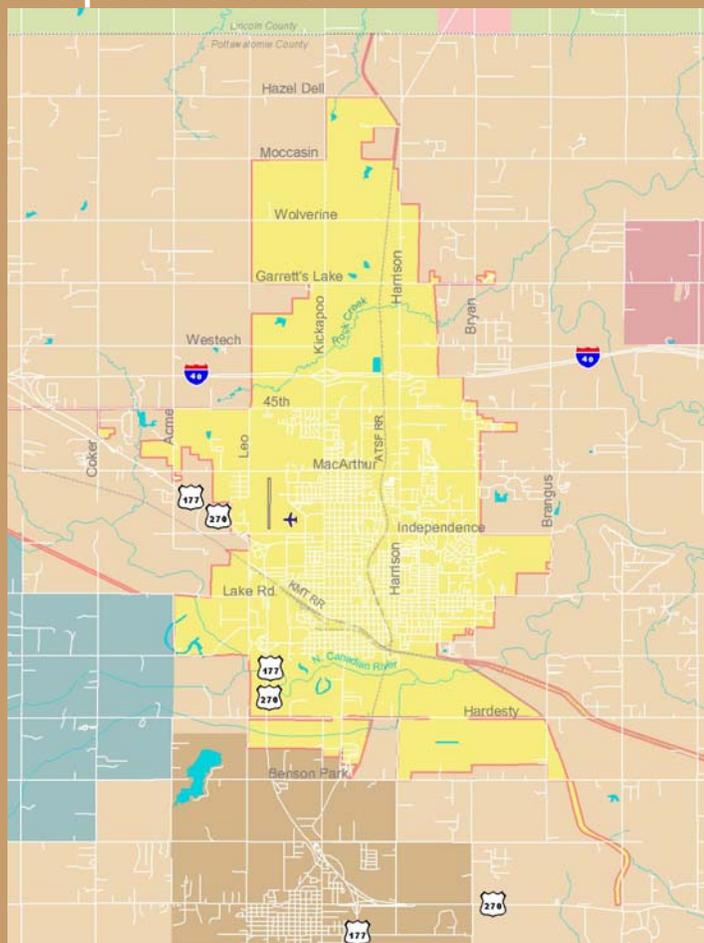
Although Shawnee has experienced considerable residential and commercial growth over the last decade, little property has

developed along the Interstate 40 corridor. Most residential development has occurred south of I-40 and in the eastern corridor of town. As a result, large tracts of land have remained untapped north of I-40. Sewer and water utilities are available to many of these sites which provide quick access to the interstate and to commercial activities in the area. There is ample land available to accommodate Shawnee's industrial needs in the future. Most industries are located north of the interstate and are surrounded by agricultural properties. There is little indication that the growth experienced during the 1990's will slow down. Several major retailers and industrial prospects visit Shawnee to identify possible locations for future development.

## INCORPORATED CITY

The City of Shawnee, displayed in *Figure 2.12, Incorporated Shawnee*, consists of 33 squares miles of land running primarily north and south. The community is 11 miles long by 3 to 4 miles wide. Drinking water is obtained from three lakes located west of town, two of which are located within the city limits. Shawnee shares common borders with Tecumseh on the South and Bethel on the Southwest.

**Figure 2.12**  
**Incorporated Shawnee**



Source: City of Shawnee.



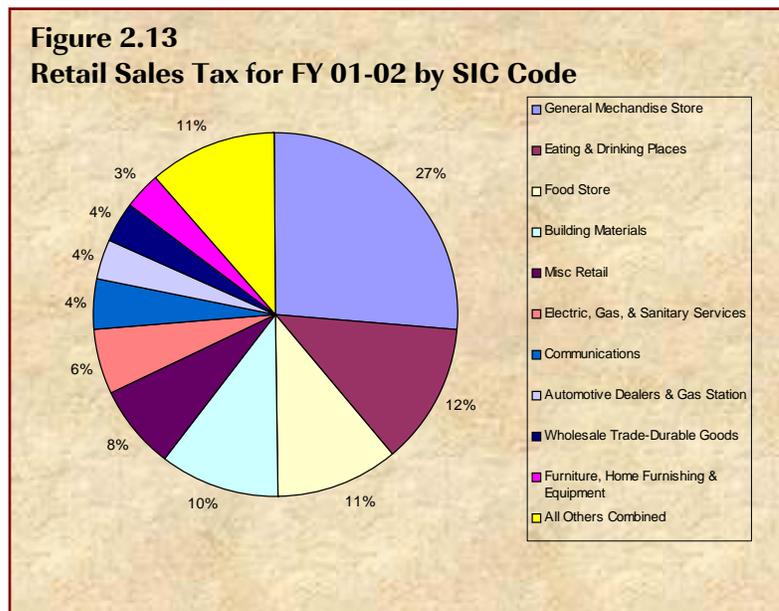


## GOVERNMENT

Shawnee is a city manager form of government, including 6 city commissioners and a mayor. Each Commissioner represents the ward in which they reside, but are elected at-large making them more responsive to the public as a whole.

### TAX STRUCTURE

As with all Oklahoma communities, Shawnee derives nearly all revenue from a levied sales tax. Some revenues are generated by utility sales, franchise fees, and licenses and permit purchases. With such a dependency on sales tax receipts, the monthly collection becomes volatile and difficult to project. *Figure 2.13, Retail Sales Tax for FY01-02 by SIC Code*, shows retail sales tax for major standard industrialization codes.



General merchandise stores generate 27% of all sales taxes collected in Shawnee and are followed by restaurants and grocery stores. This percentage depicts the impact of the Shawnee Mall on the local economy. Grocery stores generate 11% of all sales taxed collected. In 2001, a discount grocery store was opened by the Pottawatomi Indians on trust land. Sales taxes cannot be levied on trust properties by a municipality. The result was a decline in grocery sales in the first year of 10%. This loss or leakage should be partially restored as large “super stores” are constructed in the community.

### ANNEXATION AND GROWTH

The City has a lot of undeveloped land within the corporate boundaries, but must look for areas in which to expand. There are pockets of unincorporated lands around the perimeter which are surrounded on at least three sides. Most recently the controversial discussion revolved around protecting the fringe areas from encroachment by water districts and neighboring communities. In many Oklahoma communities, rural water

districts have annexed into the city limits or immediately adjacent to the corporate boundary. This encroachment restricts the city's ability to grow and to serve these areas if annexed at a later date.

## INTERNET RESOURCES

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The City of Shawnee

[www.shawneeok.org](http://www.shawneeok.org)

ORIGINS – database funded primarily by the Commerce Department to provide demographic, social and economic data on Oklahoma communities

[www.origins.ou.edu](http://www.origins.ou.edu)

Shawnee Chamber of Commerce

[www.shawnee-ok.org](http://www.shawnee-ok.org)

Shawnee Economic Development Foundation

[www.sedf.com](http://www.sedf.com)

US Census Bureau

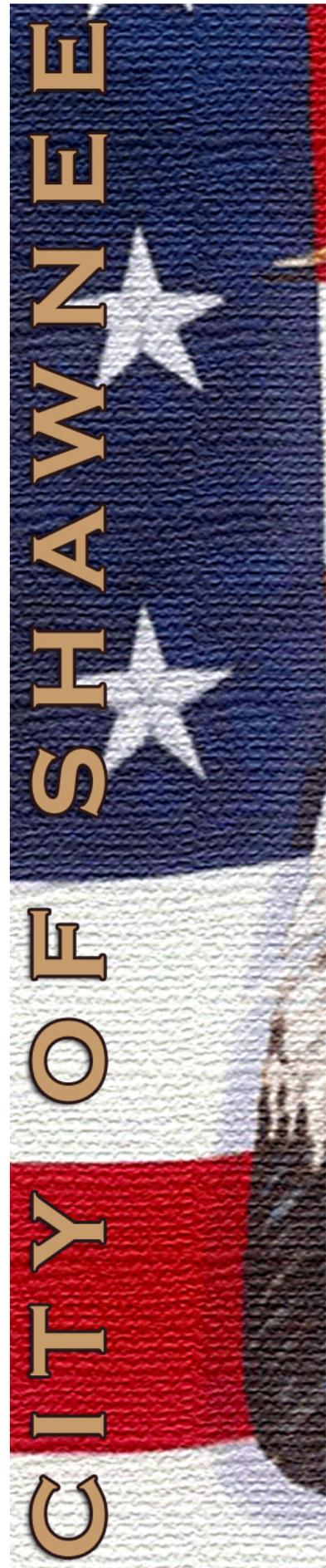
[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)

The State of Oklahoma

[www.ok.state.us](http://www.ok.state.us)

Shawnee Public Schools

[www.shawnee.k12.ok.us](http://www.shawnee.k12.ok.us)





# CHAPTER THREE

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## COMMUNITY VISION

### INTRODUCTION

Vision is the foundation for success and the first step on the road to development of a strong Comprehensive Plan for the City of Shawnee. Robert Collier once noted that vision, "...reaches beyond the thing that is, into the conception of what can be. Imagination gives you the picture. **Vision** gives you the impulse to make the picture your own." That initial concept of imagination leads to setting goals. Meeting goals requires specific actions.

By simple definition, a Comprehensive Plan is broad. It is designed to address a variety of issues ranging from the availability of affordable housing to visual improvements along Harrison Street. Equally important, though, is that the Comprehensive Plan focus upon achieving a common, imagined concept of what the community should be - physically, socially and economically.

Vision represents that concept from which the planning process begins. It is the overall consensus for how the community will be viewed by future generations. It is the understanding that the community offers many strengths and faces several challenges. The vision offers a unique image of the future based on the community's core values, building upon its strengths, and overcoming any obstacles. Most important, the vision is not simply an ideal image, it is achievable, even if the path is arduous.

The Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is designed to reach a common vision through a system of goals, objectives and action statements.

- ♦ **Goals** will serve as the general ends toward which efforts are directed. Goals are broad and, as the next step, they begin to answer the question, “how will the vision be implemented?” Goals are qualitative but offer no strong quantitative measures. Goals are designed to stretch and challenge the imagination while remaining realistic and achievable.
- ♦ **Objectives** are clear targets for specific action. They mark interim steps toward achieving vision and goals. Responding to the relevant goal, an objective is quantifiable and more specifically answers the question of “how?”. It is a measurable statement of intent that emphasizes the results of various actions at the conclusion of a defined period.
- ♦ **Action statements** are specific tasks that must be completed to achieve goals and objectives. An action is the means for transforming goals into results, with an efficient allocation of resources and mindful of fiscal constraints.

In this context, community goals, objectives and actions are structured to provide direction for the future growth and appropriate development of Shawnee. In a structure that begins broadly, each step toward implementation more precisely answers the question of “how?” Conversely, the steps can be taken in reverse to answer the question of “why?” Taken either way, the process begins and ends with **Vision**.

## THE VISION STATEMENT

Establishing vision involves gaining an understanding of what Shawnee “would like to be when it grows up” and applying those ideals to each of the plan’s elements. The Vision statement established for this growing Oklahoma community is a reflection of public opinions, data collection and field observation in which individuals cited assets, challenges, needs, and possibilities. Information was gathered during the process of establishing existing conditions and refined as the planning process reached a conclusion. It reflects the dialogue of numerous stakeholders, including elected officials, civic leaders, business owners, residents and any other members of the general public that sought to play a role in planning for the future of Shawnee.

The Vision Statement guiding the Comprehensive Plan is as follows:

***Shawnee is a community with a strong sense of its character as a small town with significant heritage and appealing amenities that strives to provide a healthy living environment in future growth and prosperity.***





## PLANNING GOALS

The following goals are designed to implement the vision established for the City of Shawnee:

### *LAND USE*

- ◆ A variety of dynamic and diverse residential areas that meet the needs of Shawnee residents;
- ◆ A thriving downtown that represents the unique character of Shawnee, exists to meet the needs of its residents and also attract others to the area;
- ◆ Respect and understanding of the major amenities that impact the physical, economic and cultural fabric of the City, as well as an effort to build upon these assets; and,
- ◆ High-quality development that promotes sensible development patterns, respects the small town and surrounding rural image of the area, does not overburden public services and infrastructure, and is appropriate to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses.

### *HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS*

- ◆ A community in which quality, affordable housing is available in sufficient quantity to all residents at all income levels;
- ◆ A variety of housing options that are attractive, adequate and available;
- ◆ Dynamic, well maintained, established neighborhoods that promote Shawnee as a community with history, character and pride; and,
- ◆ New development with the necessary amenities and design to become established, prosperous, interconnected neighborhoods.

### *TRANSPORTATION*

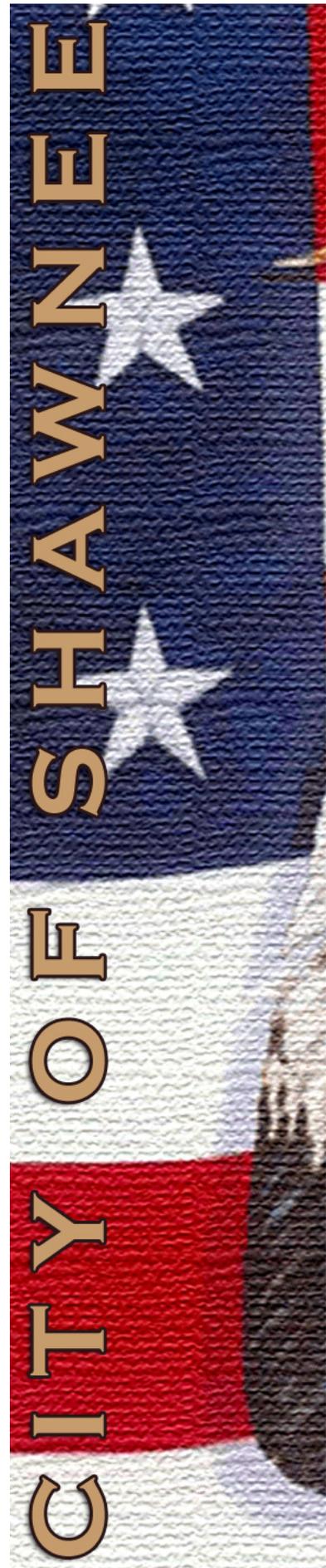
- ◆ A strong network of pedestrian paths that provide convenient, safe and efficient access between neighborhoods, schools, destinations, and businesses.
- ◆ A transportation system that encourages good urban form and capacity for growth.
- ◆ Focus on transportation features beyond traffic flow and carrying capacity, such as safety, convenience, access, and ease of navigation.
- ◆ A diverse network of air, rail, and road transport for efficient movement of goods and services produced, stored or sold in the Shawnee area.
- ◆ An efficient thoroughfare framework to aid in future growth and ease unnecessary travel hindrances through town.

*IMAGE & DESIGN*

- ◆ Identity as a community with a small town atmosphere and diverse, dynamic character;
- ◆ An appealing and easy-to-interpret attractiveness to residents and guests; and,
- ◆ Well maintained surroundings that are the direct result of pride in ownership and active community involvement.

*GROWTH CAPACITY*

- ◆ A healthy living environment that includes revenue streams sufficient to meet community needs;
- ◆ Adequate, quality services, facilities and programs to serve existing and new development; and,
- ◆ Strategic management of growth to encourage healthy, sensible, appealing, and cost effective development patterns.





# CHAPTER FOUR

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## LAND USE

### INTRODUCTION

Shawnee is a unique community with characteristics that make it distinctive. Like many communities those characteristics are changing. New businesses are created. New homes are built. While certain areas of the community become desirable, other facets of the community begin to decline. As changes occur they have the capacity to strengthen or weaken the distinct character of the community. This is particularly true in Shawnee where change has historically been cyclical. During “boom” times, change moves quickly and the reactive effort to keep up does not always include consideration of the impact on community character. Likewise, during periods without strong growth, decisions are made in an effort to spur growth that may positively or negatively impact character and local quality of life.

Nearly all action related to land use involves conscious decisions from the private sector to build, invest or move and from government to restrict, regulate, permit, or motivate. The purpose of the Land Use element is to provide a framework for those individual land use decisions, both in government and the private sector, that are based on a common vision established by the community regarding the long term order and magnitude of growth, relationship anticipated between uses and expected quality of development.

The element includes a new Future Land Use Plan, which is a graphic representation of the City’s desired long-term growth pattern. The Future Land Use map is supported by goals and objectives plus more specific policy statements regarding the community’s

ongoing growth and development. All of these tools will serve as the basis for development review recommendations and decisions and potential adjustments to the City's development-related ordinances and growth management policies.

As one component of the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Use element is designed to coordinate with various other elements of the urban fabric including transportation, housing and neighborhoods, image and design, parks and recreation, and utilities. For example, Shawnee Municipal Airport is a tremendous and obvious land use that also has implications on the transportation system of the community. Downtown revitalization requires a strong mix of residential and commercial activity as well as dynamic and accessible neighborhoods. Continued industrial development requires qualified labor, improved access and sufficient water and sewer capacity.

## KEY LAND USE ISSUES

Land use issues have been developed through an analysis of the existing pattern of development and uses in and around Shawnee, an understanding of the major features that define the community, and significant citizen input. Solutions to these issues form the foundation and structure for the Future Land Use Plan as well as goals, objectives and action statements regarding land use.

**Strengthen and Diversify Neighborhoods.** This issue is also significantly addressed in the Housing and Neighborhoods element; however, it is testament to the importance that area residents and leaders place on the quality of life in neighborhoods that it is additionally considered as a component of the Land Use element. From the perspective of this element, dynamic, accessible neighborhoods are an important component to the successful revitalization of downtown and the marketability of Shawnee as a place separate from Oklahoma City and desirable for its "small town atmosphere." Many comments suggested the need to diversify land uses within neighborhoods in the historic character of neighborhood design.

**Revitalize Downtown.** While certainly not a new concept, revitalization of downtown remains a very important issue both from an economic aspect and because of the impact a healthy, functional downtown has on the pride and marketability of the community. Downtown Shawnee offers some tremendous opportunities to serve as a hub for commercial, government, entertainment and residential activity. However, revitalization of downtown will require substantial commitment by the community and difficult decisions regarding land use in other areas.





**Build on Assets.** For a community of its size, the City of Shawnee includes a number of major features that act as “magnets” for land use – meaning that certain activities are (or should be) attracted to those features while others naturally keep a distance. Oklahoma Baptist University and St. Gregory University not only offer an educational “presence” but additionally offer cultural facilities and are natural attractors for dynamic neighborhoods, both for students and instructors. The Shawnee Mall, particularly with its premium location along Interstate 40 and Kickapoo Street, attracts commercial retail establishments such as Chilis, Hampton Inn and Cracker Barrel. The industrial park has a long term opportunity to attract industries looking to locate in the Oklahoma City market. Shawnee Municipal Airport is a tremendous benefit to the community as a tool for economic development. Like the industrial park, the airport is an attraction to certain industries and commercial activities. At the same time, residential activity tends to steer clear of airports and industrial activity. By recognizing and enhancing the natural relationships offered by these and other major features, the community can become better organized and more efficient.

**Grow Sensibly.** Not too surprisingly, the City of Shawnee has followed recent traditional patterns of development by permitting land use to be dictated by the automobile. Perhaps this is most obvious along roadways such as Kickapoo and Harrison Streets. The majority of destinations in Shawnee are accessible by one means – the car. A more appropriate pattern of development focuses on “districts.” It may no longer be possible (or desirable) for all major shopping activity to occur in and around downtown or the Shawnee Mall, however, establishments can be developed in a manner that promotes multiple destinations in a single trip. While the community is not rapidly expanding and consuming surrounding rural land, it is growing outward. If Shawnee is to maintain and enforce an image of a small town alternative to Oklahoma City, efforts will have to be made to define and protect rural areas from sprawl, including slow but nonetheless obvious strip development of farm land. Strategic annexation may allow the community to manage fringe development and address opportunities such as development associated with Interstate 40.

## LAND USE GOALS

Goals for land use are a reflection of the development issues facing the City of Shawnee and the community’s vision for the future. Goals are developed with the understanding that the decision to alter land use does not simply impact the site, but can positively or negatively impact the surrounding environment. Land use goals and subsequent objectives and action statements allow the community to take an aggressive stand on the manner in which changes to land use should occur.

The following goals are designed to guide land use decisions so that Shawnee is a community that offers:

- ◆ A variety of dynamic and diverse residential areas that meet the needs of Shawnee residents;
- ◆ A thriving downtown that represents the unique character of Shawnee, exists to meet the needs of its residents and also attract others to the area;
- ◆ Respect and understanding of the major amenities that impact the physical, economic and cultural fabric of the City, as well as an effort to build upon these assets; and,
- ◆ High-quality development that promotes sensible development patterns, respects the small town and surrounding rural image of the area, does not overburden public services and infrastructure, and is appropriate to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses.

## LAND USE OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

### STRENGTHEN NEIGHBORHOODS

**Goal One:** A variety of dynamic and diverse residential areas that meet the needs of Shawnee residents.

#### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Promote pedestrian activity, sense of place, communication and dynamic character in existing and future neighborhoods through incorporation of complementary uses.
- ◆ Establish a sense of physical, social and cultural identity in the various existing and future neighborhoods of Shawnee.

#### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Strategically mix uses, including limited neighborhood commercial development as well as major focal points such as schools, places of worship, parks, open spaces, day care, post office, emergency service, and allow for each to be interconnected by pedestrian friendly corridors.
- ✓ Consider alternative uses for vacant lots, such as creation of a neighborhood park or a neighborhood commercial establishment in strategically appropriate areas.
- ✓ In coordination with research for the next Consolidated Plan, conduct a detailed housing condition survey to determine the quality of the existing housing stock and identify all substandard housing visible from the exterior.
- ✓ Utilize planned unit development provisions to encourage innovative and imaginative site design that minimizes adverse impacts on adjacent properties.
- ✓ Require parks, schools, places of worship, neighborhood centers, or other options as a means of creating a





community focal point. Consider appropriate zoning for these public and institutional uses.

- ✓ Residential areas should be appropriately buffered and screened from primary streets and adjacent commercial, office and community facility uses. Residential areas should not be next to industrial areas.
- ✓ Neighborhood retail and service uses should be located at intersections of arterial or collector streets or at the edge of logical neighborhood areas unless appropriately placed within a planned development.
- ✓ Permit secondary dwellings with appropriate restrictions such as above-garage apartments and “granny flats” in all residential zoning districts by right to improve diversity, affordability and efficiency of area neighborhoods.

## REVITALIZE DOWNTOWN

**Goal Two:** A thriving downtown that represents the unique character of Shawnee, exists to meet the needs of its residents and also attract others to the area.

### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Build upon the excitement generated through development of the Downtown Action Agenda 2000.
- ◆ Ensure that government offices remain in downtown and that new government facilities complement historic structures.
- ◆ Establish a solid downtown District that can be expanded to represent and revitalize the entire commercial core.

### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Ensure that the public is aware of progress in implementing the Downtown Action Agenda 2000 and market success stories.
- ✓ Mandate that government facilities that serve as offices or places involving public interaction, other than annex facilities such as branch libraries, locate in the downtown.
- ✓ New, expanded or renovated government structures should, to the extent practical, be complementary to downtown design and represent an example to the private sector.
- ✓ Consider design guidelines for specific districts, such as the Downtown District that ensure complementary design, particularly from those receiving low interest loans, grant funds, tax incentives or other measures.
- ✓ Expand the boundaries selected for the Downtown Action Agenda, if appropriate, and designate them as the initial boundaries for the Downtown District.
- ✓ Establish a Strategic Plan or an Implementation Checklist based upon the Downtown Action Agenda that adds accountability to accomplishing actions.

## BUILD ON ASSETS

**Goal Three:** Respect and understanding of the major amenities that impact the physical, economic and cultural fabric of the City, as well as an effort to build upon these assets.

### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Strategically establish districts around key amenities such as St. Gregory's and Oklahoma Baptist Universities, the Expo Center, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, Downtown, the Shawnee Mall, the industrial park, and any neighborhoods that seek to offer distinctive character and identity.

### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Seek funds such as the Economic Adjustment Program available through the Economic Development Administration for planning and improvements designed to improve community marketability.
- ✓ Coordinate with major amenities and develop specific area plans designed to build upon the strengths of the major features, including solidifying edges, nodes, landmarks and paths.
- ✓ Designate district boundaries for the area surrounding each of the major features such as the Shawnee Municipal Airport and implement a specific area plan in coordination with the major features and other community partners.
- ✓ Ensure that development within each district is compatible and cohesive to the extent possible.
- ✓ Establish an appropriate theme for each district designed to build upon the area's character and establish identity including use of physical improvements such as signage, landscaping, gateways, façade improvements and other streetscape features.

## GROW SENSIBLY

**Goal Four:** High-quality development that promotes sensible development patterns, respects the small town and surrounding rural image of the area, does not overburden public services and infrastructure, and is appropriate to achieve an efficient, diverse and balanced pattern of land uses.

### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Promote growth where adequate infrastructure exists.
- ◆ Encourage infill development where appropriate (utilities, compatibility, etc.).
- ◆ Ensure that development within targeted growth areas will not reduce the adequacy of public facilities and services.
- ◆ Coordinate the location, type and density of land use activity with utilities and transportation planning to ensure desired development outcomes.





- ◆ Plan for mixing and/or separation of land use types based on desired location, density and pattern of development.
- ◆ Undertake annexation and extension of services in a coordinated and timely manner to protect public interest and assure continued orderly growth and development.
- ◆ Annex key growth areas when and where appropriate.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Determine acceptable levels of service for all public services and facilities and make them a consideration in approval of new development to ensure that water, wastewater, law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical service, trash disposal, and recreational opportunities are adequately available.
- ✓ Maintain the Future Land Use Plan consistent with development trends and patterns.
- ✓ Identify targeted, preferred growth areas just beyond the existing city limits (through utility extension planning, advance parkland and school site acquisition, Thoroughfare Plan implementation, annexation planning).
- ✓ Monitor changes in land use allocation over time relative to the Future Land Use Plan.
- ✓ Review zoning and other development ordinances to ensure they support infill strategies and desired land use intensities and patterns.
- ✓ Adopt infill/redevelopment incentives (flexibility in development regulations, waiver of development fees, direct grants, tax incentives).
- ✓ Offer tax incentives or other financial participation for infill and/or redevelopment projects.
- ✓ Begin incremental implementation of a long-term annexation strategy, both through landowner-requested as well as City-initiated annexations.
- ✓ Use capital improvements planning to focus road and utility upgrades in preferred growth, infill and redevelopment areas.
- ✓ Consider "Adequate Public Facility" provisions to ensure infrastructure concurrent with new development.

### **EXISTING LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT**

Existing land use provides clues to historic and current development trends and provides a "snapshot" of uses available throughout Shawnee. An inventory of existing land use was conducted in June 2003 as a basic data collection activity utilized to gain an understanding of the location, pattern and extent of development in and around the City of Shawnee, including the Twin Lakes area. The analysis involved an extensive windshield survey as well as use of recent aerial imagery provided by City staff. Land use information in rural and relatively undeveloped

portions of the City was more generalized to reflect the limited extent of development.

**EXISTING USES**

Table 4.1, *Estimated 2003 Land Use* provides a glimpse into the current composition of land uses in the Shawnee Planning Area. Categories used to collect data were typical of general land use analysis, including various categories of residential, commercial, industrial, and public or semi-public activity. Undeveloped areas within the municipal limits of Shawnee were categorized as vacant property while areas of rural or agricultural character, including the occasional residence or incidental commercial activity were categorized as “rural development.”



Table 4.1  
Estimated 2003 Land Use

Land Use	Existing Land Use		
	Acreage	Composition	
		Total Area	Developed Area
<b>Residential Use</b>	<b>7,925.4</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>56.4%</b>
Single Family	7,720.2	10.5%	54.9%
Multifamily	118.2	0.2%	0.8%
Manufactured Housing/Mobile Homes	87.0	0.1%	0.6%
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>623.9</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
Commercial General	476.9	0.6%	3.4%
Commercial Office	147.0	0.2%	1.0%
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>707.0</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	<b>5.0%</b>
Light Industrial	296.3	0.4%	2.1%
Heavy Industrial	410.7	0.6%	2.9%
<b>Public/Semi Public</b>	<b>4,799.9</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>34.1%</b>
Public/Semi Public Facilities	1,217.4	1.7%	8.7%
Parks & Open Space	483.1	0.7%	3.4%
Right of Way	3,099.4	4.2%	22.0%
<b>Vacant or Rural Development</b>	<b>59,509.2</b>	<b>80.9%</b>	
Undeveloped	4,966.0	6.8%	
Rural Development	53,090.2	72.2%	
Water	1,453.0	2.0%	
<b>Total Planning Area</b>	<b>73,565.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
<b>Total Developed Area</b>	<b>14,056.1</b>	<b>19.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

Results of the analysis are not surprising, although they solidify the notion that Shawnee includes traits that are often unavailable to communities of similar size. Of the more than 73,500 acres that comprise the Shawnee Planning Area, approximately 80.9% represents rural development, vacant land in municipal limits, or water (Twin Lakes composes 2% of the planning area). As is common, residential activity occupies the majority of **developed** land in the Shawnee Planning Area.

The percentage of developed land in Shawnee devoted to public or semi-public activities is uncommon and represents the unique attributes of the community, including the two universities, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, the airport, the Expo Center and the hospital. While the percentage of public and semi-public



space is larger as a result of these facilities, the increase is not extraordinarily substantial for a variety of reasons. First, the large majority of public and semi-public land continues to be consumed by right-of-way, mostly for streets. Second, residential, commercial and industrial activities also increase to serve these facilities. In this manner, presence of these features is somewhat muted but remains noteworthy. Their impact is, however, prominent in the **pattern** of land uses in Shawnee.

### LAND USE PATTERN

Kevin Lynch, a renowned urban planner with a strong understanding of the physical, social and economic patterns of sites and communities, proposed that communities are dictated by five key features: paths, districts, nodes, edges and landmarks. All five are key ingredients found in most successful communities. Interestingly, as time progresses, the features have changed in location and magnitude. In many communities, features such as edges and districts had begun to disappear. However, in recent years and with the advent of Smart Growth, planners and community leaders are once again realizing the important role that each feature plays in establishing a strong sense of community character.

**Paths.** Paths are channels for residents and visitors to travel from one destination to another. These may include roads, sidewalks, trails, waterways, and railroads. Paths create the framework of the community on which all other components fit. More, they provide the uses along major paths that provide the impression or “experience” of a place. Paths in Shawnee are largely limited to streets, including major roadways such as Business Route 270, State Road 18, Farral/Harrison Street, Kickapoo Street, and Independence Street. The Union Pacific Rail lines that bisect the City of Shawnee offer an informal path. Arterial roadways often also serve as edges.

On a smaller scale, paths include local and collector streets within various neighborhoods, such as Market, Center and University Streets. The absence of sidewalks or a substantial trail system is an obvious disadvantage to the pedestrian experience.

**Districts.** Districts are identifiable areas within a community or neighborhood. Each has a distinct character that is separate from other areas but is clear as people enter and leave districts by traveling along various paths. That character is generally physical and can be as simple as a stark change in land use, such as an industrial district, a transition in development styles, or distinct gateways (entry/exit landmarks) and edges. Within a community, neighborhoods can function as districts or can be combined into larger “residential districts.” Over past decades, during the advent of the automobile, the concept of districts began to fade as

commercial activities spread along roadways and interconnected, adjacent neighborhoods gave way to single access, remote subdivisions. However, in recent years, districts have been reinvigorated and the concept has become a major tool for revitalization of urban areas. Within Shawnee, the most recognizable districts are the grounds of the two universities. Other areas, such as downtown and the Shawnee Mall offer certain characteristics, but do not offer sufficient contrast to be considered districts. Locations such as the industrial park, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, and new subdivisions such as Enchanted Garden are isolated “islands” more than districts. Missed opportunities include the vast network of established neighborhoods and the Expo Center.

**Nodes.** Nodes are significant destinations where people eventually arrive. They primarily include focused concentrations of land uses, a major feature (perhaps at the intersection of several paths), or any other location or event that commonly draws individuals together. On a communitywide scale, nodes may include such destinations as the Shawnee Mall, the Expo Center, the industrial park, and the Gordon Cooper Technology Center. On a smaller scale, a node offers local destinations such as neighborhood parks, schools or a neighborhood grocery store. To be a successful district, an area should have at least one node as a means of local gathering and communication. In some instances, such as the two universities, an area serves as a node, a district and possibly a landmark.

**Edges.** Edges are the distinct ending of one area and, if well designed, the obvious beginning of another. An edge is always a physical presence, such as where a residential neighborhood abuts a non-residential district. In most successful cases, edges are not only physical, but also mental in the sense that the “experience” changes. Unfortunately, many of today’s edges represent barriers rather than unique character. Harrison Street, for example, serves as a path, but also forms a tremendous barrier that is strong enough to create an edge. Nationally, a trend among many new subdivisions is to limit access and surround development with a wall or fence. While this successfully forms an edge, it also represents division and exclusion. The most obvious edges in Shawnee are those that form barriers and are primarily roadways or railways. The Union Pacific Rail line that travels north and south through the city, for example, creates a stark edge that bisects the city.

Sometimes activities on either side of an edge are not compatible, leading to problematic edge conditions and the perceived need to establish barriers. Managing edge conditions is a major focus of city planning and development regulations. Edges should not be





confused with gateways, which are landmarks limited to high-profile entries and exit points.

**Landmarks.** Landmarks are focal points. They help to orient the resident or visitor within the community or neighborhood, and they often imprint a mental image of an area. The impact of a landmark, however, depends not only on its magnitude but also upon its uniqueness. In urban areas such as Shawnee, a landmark may include a major monument or structure or an obvious feature, such as the Santa Fe Depot or Kidspace Park. In a more rural setting, items such as a barn, large house, an unusual sign, or even a particularly recognizable tree can become landmarks.

The City of Shawnee has its own unique versions of these city “building blocks.” Their location and nature are determined by the community’s historic development pattern as well as the needs and desires of its residents. A general depiction of these physical features was prepared during the comprehensive planning process as a hand-drawn sketch map, which is on file with the City of Shawnee Planning Department and was instrumental in drafting the Future Land Use and Thoroughfare Plans.

### **ANTICIPATED TRENDS**

Several trends are occurring that continue to impact land development patterns. In preparation for development of the Future Land Use Plan, the following trends appear to warrant consideration and discussion. It should be noted that the following trends represent themes that are based upon professional expertise and general observation of development patterns. It should also be noted that the following themes are anticipated without the influence of the Future Land Use Plan. Some, like continued growth from individuals seeking the small town feel within the Oklahoma City market are opportunities that can be recognized and enhanced through the Future Land Use Plan. Others, such as continued strip commercial growth along Harrison and Kickapoo Streets are contradictory to promotion of commercial districts and can be reduced by following the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan.

- ◆ Residents and businesses interested in Oklahoma City are likely to increasingly consider Shawnee as a small town alternative.
- ◆ Residential activity will continue to occur along the fringes of Shawnee in conventional fashion, such as developments currently under construction along 45<sup>th</sup> Street and along Gray Dove.
- ◆ Commercial activity will likely develop in an ad-hoc fashion with tourist and interstate related activities likely to occur

along Interstate 40 and other activities to locate along major strip corridors such as Kickapoo and Harrison Streets. Harrison Street offers significant, large lot, undeveloped or underdeveloped land near Interstate 40 that will witness pressure for growth.

- ◆ Rural residential development will continue to occur as single lot, strip development along the various roadways surrounding Shawnee, particularly along linkages to Twin Lakes.
- ◆ The high poverty level in Shawnee will continue to be a factor that inhibits individual efforts for rehabilitation of commercial or residential structures. This may, to an extent, be mitigated by new industrial growth and continued effort of the Gordon Cooper Technology Center.
- ◆ Industrial activity will continue to develop in the industrial park and outside of the jurisdiction of Shawnee Public Schools. As a result, the significant tax base that accompanies industrial development will continue to benefit surrounding school districts.
- ◆ Oklahoma Baptist and St. Gregory's Universities will experience slow, but steady growth. Oklahoma Baptist has recently purchased land north of MacArthur with the long term intent of development of new athletic facilities.
- ◆ Activity around Shawnee Municipal Airport will increase. Some existing businesses in the area have already indicated a need to expand and efforts are underway to generate additional activity including a grant awarded to generate a web site for information about the airport.
- ◆ Downtown revitalization efforts are expected to steadily increase in coming years. The Downtown Action Agenda 2000 sparked new interest in downtown development. The five major banks in Shawnee pooled resources to form a revolving loan fund offering low interest loans (\$250,000) to persons interested in downtown restoration. The Federal National Bank and Masonic Building proposed for renovation and rehabilitation of The Aldridge will soon begin. The Ritz Theatre has been donated to the Downtown Shawnee Main Street Program and has received needed façade treatments. Baptist Athletics recently renovated the façade of the facility formerly known as Baptist Hardware. Several opportunities exist to incorporate residential development into downtown.
- ◆ Construction of the new WalMart adjacent to the Shawnee Mall will generate significant additional retail investment along the north and south sides of the Interstate 40 corridor. The portion of the Shawnee Mall currently occupied by WalMart will likely be removed and replaced with outdoor entry retail.



## LAND USE PROJECTIONS

Land use projections for the City of Shawnee and the Shawnee Planning Area are based upon existing conditions, anticipated growth and trends that will likely result in increased or decreased development of a certain land use. Projections represent a forecast of future land use requirements that aid in development of the Future Land Use Plan and the Future Land Use Map. As with housing and population projections, it is important to note that land use projections represent possible scenarios. While an effort is made to anticipate future events, it is impossible to anticipate all of the events that will impact land use in and around the community of Shawnee. Regular review of the composition of land uses in the planning area is recommended to determine if

Table 4.2  
Estimated 2020 Land Use

Land Use	2020 Scenario W/O Plan			2020 Scenario With Plan		
	Acreage	Composition		Acreage	Composition	
		Total Area	Developed Area		Total Area	Developed Area
<b>Residential Use</b>	<b>10,659.6</b>	<b>14.5%</b>	<b>54.0%</b>	<b>9,537.2</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>52.6%</b>
Single Family	10,383.7	14.1%	52.6%	9,264.3	12.6%	51.1%
Multifamily	158.9	0.2%	0.8%	177.3	0.2%	1.0%
Manufactured Housing/ Mobile Homes	117.0	0.2%	0.6%	95.7	0.1%	0.5%
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>1,093.6</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>921.1</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
Commercial General	858.4	1.2%	4.4%	715.3	1.0%	3.9%
Commercial Office	235.2	0.3%	1.2%	205.8	0.3%	1.1%
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>1,201.9</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>1,201.9</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>
Light Industrial	503.7	0.7%	2.6%	503.7	0.7%	2.8%
Heavy Industrial	698.2	0.9%	3.5%	698.2	0.9%	3.8%
<b>Public/Semi Public</b>	<b>6,772.3</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>34.3%</b>	<b>6,479.9</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>35.7%</b>
Public/Semi Public Facilities	1,637.5	2.2%	8.3%	1,582.7	2.2%	8.7%
Parks & Open Space	966.2	1.3%	4.9%	966.2	1.3%	5.3%
Right of Way	4,168.6	5.7%	21.1%	3,874.2	5.3%	21.4%
<b>Vacant or Rural Development</b>	<b>53,838.0</b>	<b>73.2%</b>		<b>55,425.3</b>	<b>75.3%</b>	
Undeveloped	996.1	1.4%		1,290.5	1.8%	
Rural Development	51,388.9	69.9%		52,681.8	71.6%	
Water	1,453.0	2.0%		1,453.0	2.0%	
<b>Total Planning Area</b>	<b>73,565.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>73,565.3</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
<b>Total Developed Area</b>	<b>19,727.3</b>	<b>26.8%</b>		<b>18,140.0</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates

projections remain appropriate or require amendment.

As noted in *Table 4.2, Estimated 2020 Land Use*, the Comprehensive Plan anticipates that Shawnee and its developed area will grow within the next two decades. This is partially the result of anticipated growth in population; however, it is also recognition that the consistent desire for new development will ensure that even times of slow growth will result in some expansion of the developed area.

Projections for future land use are based upon two development scenarios. Both assume that population growth will follow the

recommended polynomial population projection presented in *Chapter 2, Community Profile*. The first scenario suggests possible land use growth if current trends continue absent the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan. The second scenario highlights the potential impact that the Comprehensive Plan can have on anticipated growth.

### **SCENARIO ONE: DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING CURRENT TRENDS**

The first scenario proposes growth during the two decades between 2000 and 2020 will expand the developed area of Shawnee by 40% in response to national and local trends. This scenario recognizes a national trend for increased land consumption above an increase in number of units or facilities as homebuyers and developers of commercial, industrial and public facilities seek larger lots. By 2020, developed land is expected to grow to over 19,700 acres and represent nearly 27% of the current planning area.

#### *RESIDENTIAL GROWTH*

- ◆ Land needed for residential development will grow at a consistent pace with population projections. National trends point to continued growth in average home sizes, including apartment units and manufactured housing. The composition of residential development is expected to largely consist of separate, single use, single family subdivisions.
- ◆ Multifamily development will also continue to follow a “bigger is better” mentality, including more units per complex and more property consumed. Little development of residential alternatives is expected.
- ◆ Factory-built housing is expected to be relegated to manufactured housing communities with little opportunity for development as an affordable alternative for homeownership.
- ◆ Without a planned approach, residential development will increasingly sprawl and provide few answers to major housing issues such as affordability and neighborhood character.

#### *COMMERCIAL GROWTH*

- ◆ Commercial growth – and the land consumed for commercial development - will likely outpace population growth over the course of the next two decades.
- ◆ Commercial retail is expected to be among the most expansive of land uses as national brands continue to diversify and expand into markets previously considered too small to be profitable. Shawnee will see particular expansion of commercial activity surrounding the Shawnee Mall and Interstate 40 as the community enhances its role as a regional shopping destination and a viable stop for travelers.





- ◆ Commercial office activity is expected to outpace population growth as Shawnee becomes more attractive as an alternative location to Oklahoma City. Office space is likely to grow in a strip fashion along Kickapoo Street, Harrison Street, MacArthur Street, 45<sup>th</sup> Street, and in downtown.
- ◆ Kickapoo Street is likely to continue growing as a commercial strip corridor with residential units turned into commercial office and service establishments, as well as commercial construction.

#### *INDUSTRIAL GROWTH*

- ◆ Industrial activity will likely outpace population growth as industries seek an alternative to Oklahoma City. Light and heavy industry are expected to see equal growth. Industrial development will most likely occur in the area of Wolverine, Harrison and Kickapoo Streets. Growth may occur around the Shawnee Municipal Airport and pressure may occur for development of additional industry along Old Highway 270.

#### *PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC GROWTH*

- ◆ A new park master plan in development of the City of Shawnee will place added emphasis on development of recreation opportunities, including the proposed regional park located north of Shawnee along Kickapoo Street. The emphasis on parks improvements is expected to result in additional growth for parks and recreational spaces during the course of the Comprehensive Plan that outpaces population growth.
- ◆ Public facilities and right-of-way are expected to grow as needed with the pace of population growth.

#### *VACANT OR RURAL DEVELOPMENT*

- ◆ New development activity will result in loss of more 5,600 acres of undeveloped municipal land or rural areas. Approximately 70% of land consumed for development is expected to occur in areas that are within the municipal limits of Shawnee.

### **SCENARIO TWO: UTILIZING THE PLAN**

An alternative scenario more closely resembles the anticipated rate of growth if recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan are instituted. This scenario also envisions expansion of the developed area. However, unlike the 40% growth anticipated between 2000 and 2020 by the initial scenario, Scenario Two proposes growth of only 29%. More important, Scenario Two does not envision fewer homes or businesses locating in Shawnee. Rather, use of less land results from better land management practices.

#### *RESIDENTIAL GROWTH*

- ◆ Land needed for residential development will grow at a slower rate than population projections through a variety of activities

designed to increase affordability and neighborhood character. Residential areas will increase slightly in density, but will further benefit from alternative designs for new neighborhoods such as clustering, traditional neighborhood design, zero-lot line development, and incorporation of “life-cycle” housing.

- ◆ Multifamily development will consume land at a rate faster than population growth and faster than that proposed for Scenario One. However, while some additional large scale multifamily development will occur, most growth will occur through a variety of lower density options such as granny flats, triplexes, and townhomes. Planned, limited integration of low density, multifamily units into single family neighborhoods will add a diverse and dynamic character to neighborhoods while also establishing the options needed for “life-cycle” housing – housing alternatives that provide individuals ample opportunity to remain in the same area as their housing needs change.
- ◆ Factory-built housing communities are expected to grow at a rate that is slower than population growth. However, this is not because of reduced desire for affordable housing. Introduction of modular homes – designed to meet the community’s expectations - into neighborhoods will reduce demand for development of manufactured housing communities that are not designed to the standards of a neighborhood.

#### COMMERCIAL GROWTH

- ◆ As expected in Scenario One, commercial growth will likely outpace population growth over the course of the next two decades. However, innovative land management practices incorporated into Scenario Two suggest that such growth can be accommodated successfully while utilizing less land.
- ◆ Commercial retail is still expected to grow at a strong rate. However, through mixed use development and clustering of businesses (rather than strip commercial activity) the amount of land needed is expected to be substantially smaller. Still, however, land needed to accommodate commercial retail demands is expected to outpace population growth.
- ◆ Commercial office activity will also outpace population growth, however, unlike Scenario One, the difference will be minimal. As with retail, commercial office space will benefit from development of dynamic, mixed use areas and a renewed focus on concentrating office space in downtown.
- ◆ In Scenario Two, strip commercial development may still occur, but it will be managed and minimized to the extent possible in order to promote more focused and pedestrian friendly commercial opportunities.





### *INDUSTRIAL GROWTH*

- ◆ Industrial growth will likely remain similar to Scenario One in terms of land required. However, activity is expected to occur in a fashion designed to benefit both industry and the surrounding areas. The majority of development is still expected to occur in the area of Kickapoo, Wolverine and Harrison Streets, but will develop as an internally oriented industrial park. Other areas of industrial growth, particularly near Shawnee Municipal Airport, will be managed to address the needs of surrounding residential areas.

### *PUBLIC & SEMI-PUBLIC GROWTH*

- ◆ Growth of parks and trails will remain as expected in Scenario One, however, the amount of land needed for right-of-way and development of facilities is expected to grow more slowly than population.
- ◆ Public and semi-public facilities are expected to follow an increasing trend toward shared resources. Typical examples include school facilities that also function as local libraries, parks, and community centers.
- ◆ Right-of-way is expected to grow more slowly than population growth in anticipation of limited sprawl, mixed use activity and incorporation of design techniques such as clustering that reduce right-of-way (as well as infrastructure, street and maintenance costs).

### *VACANT OR RURAL DEVELOPMENT*

- ◆ Better management of land in Scenario Two is expected to result in slightly more than 4,000 additional acres consumed for development – roughly 1,600 less than Scenario One. More, approximately 90% of development is expected to occur on undeveloped property within the City of Shawnee resulting in reduced development in rural areas.

## **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

The Future Land Use Plan builds upon growth trends, land use projects, the physical features of the community and surrounding area, needs expressed through the Community Forum, Key Person Interviews and coordination with staff and the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee. The result is a plan that builds upon the strengths of Shawnee and utilizes features such as the universities, growing interest in downtown, commercial growth near the Shawnee Mall and Interstate 40, and the presence of the Gordon Cooper Technology Center.

The Future Land Use Plan is based upon existing land uses and development patterns. As such, it offers a vision for future activity while also recognizing that today's uses represent the foundation for preservation or change. The Future Land Use Plan does not simply assume that today's uses will exist in 2020. Rather, it recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of today's pattern of

land uses and proposes changes to be made over time that will improve the character and quality of life in Shawnee.

The Future Land Use Plan focuses upon development of specific character districts designed to emphasize both the small town character of Shawnee as well as utilize the unique characteristics of the community. *Figure 4.1, Character Districts*, indicates districts to be developed in Shawnee while the Future Land Use Plan provides detail regarding the opportunities to establish the districts as a series of interconnected entities with distinct and desirable features.

## CHARACTER DISTRICTS

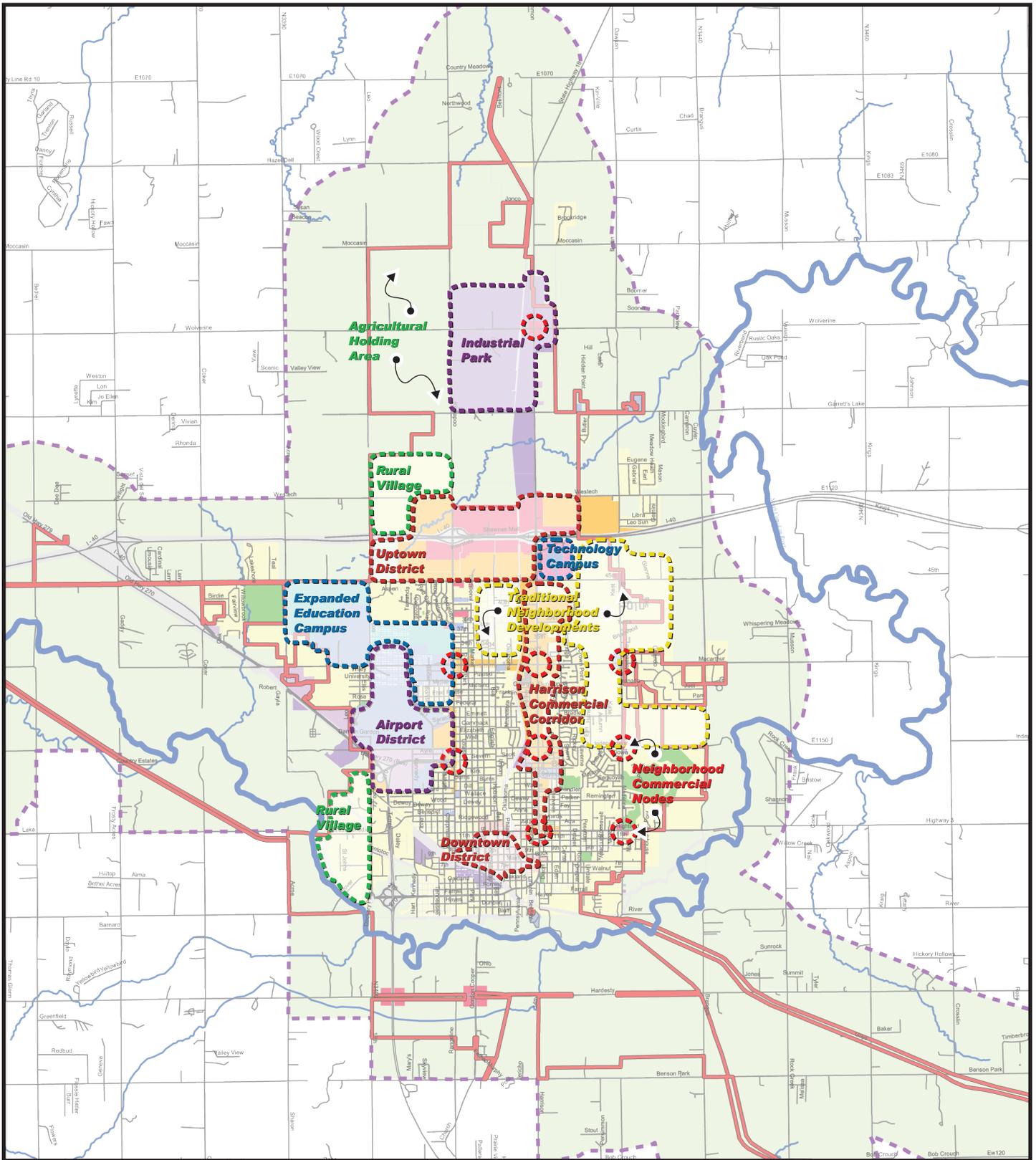
### *DOWNTOWN DISTRICT*

The Downtown District largely represents the Central Business District of Shawnee. As noted, significant effort has already gone into promotion and planning for revitalization of the downtown area and it appears that interest is growing. The Downtown District developed in the Future Land Use Plan potentially expands the boundaries established by the Shawnee Downtown Action Agenda by including nearby commercial activity along Main Street and transition areas into surrounding neighborhoods.

The Downtown District proposes the following:

- ♦ a wide mix of land uses designed to reflect the dynamic nature of a strong downtown. Downtown is a destination for numerous Shawnee residents, although it is currently a sporadic destination. A strong blend of residential, commercial, recreational and public uses will create a more robust environment that can enhance pedestrian and vehicular traffic as well as interest in downtown as a regular destination;
- ♦ continued commitment of government facilities, when appropriate, to be located in the downtown area. Government remains a strong contributor to the vitality of downtown, including such facilities as City Hall and the library. Government facilities, because of their numerous functions, represent a destination for many of the individuals traveling to downtown. It is likely that private development will look to the government sector in downtown to gauge the community's commitment to redevelopment. Therefore, it is important that government facilities not only remain in downtown, but also represent the quality of development expected from the private sector.
- ♦ substantial commercial office, retail and service activity that includes specialty retail and entertainment. Downtown should maintain its role as the primary source for commercial office activity in Shawnee, bolstered by support activities such as





**FIGURE 4.1  
CHARACTER DISTRICTS**

# CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





office supplies and dining services. At the same time, sufficient evening activity should be available to support downtown as an evening destination, particularly for those individuals that choose to live in and around downtown;

- ◆ residential opportunities including upper story apartments and flats above commercial activity, townhomes and other medium to high density residential opportunities along the outskirts of the district as it transitions into neighborhoods, and reuse of historic structures for multifamily living. Seniors, students, and young couples without children are the most likely candidates for downtown living;
- ◆ development that is sensitive to the historic, architectural character of downtown, as well as the surrounding residential areas. Significant effort should continue to be made to redevelop historic structures. Pedestrian amenities should be abundant in the downtown district.

#### *UPTOWN DISTRICT*

While downtown should continue to serve as the commercial office and government/institutional hub for Shawnee, the reality is that large scale commercial retail activity will locate along Interstate 40 in proximity to the Shawnee Mall. This area also offers immediate access to the interstate for potential commuters that work in Oklahoma City but are seeking a small town escape from the large urban area.

The Uptown District is proposed as a means to maximize the full potential of the land along the interstate and near Shawnee Mall through development in a planned, coordinated manner. Features of the Uptown District include:

- ◆ Expansion of the commercial retail activity between Kickapoo and Harrison Streets along both sides of Interstate 40. Activity is anticipated to include “big box” development such as the new WalMart, integrated with national brand chain stores, restaurants and lodging. Commercial activity along the Interstate is expected to meet many of the retail needs of residents while also serving as an immediate destination for travelers.
- ◆ Commercial activity in the Uptown District need not maintain a strict, singular design standard. However, the district will be most recognizable if common themes are found in architecture, landscaping and along the streetscape. Common and interconnected pathways will further promote a single identity.
- ◆ Mixed residential development is proposed along the east and west edges of the Uptown District. Housing in the Uptown District is expected to range from medium to high density with limited commercial retail and office space integrated into

development. Floodplains and waterways should be preserved and utilized as a recreational and aesthetic amenity that is creatively integrated into development. Areas adjacent to traditional residential development, such as that along 45<sup>th</sup> Street east of Kickapoo, should be scaled appropriately to successfully provide a transition into low density neighborhoods.

- ◆ Due to the density of residential areas in the Uptown District, it is recommended that open space and active recreation amenities, such as trails within the floodplain and parks be an integral part of the district.

#### *INDUSTRIAL "PARK"*

The Future Land Use Plan proposes significant revision to industrial uses serving Shawnee by consolidation into established and protected industrial "parks" designed for industrial efficiency and compatibility between uses. More recent industrial development has occurred along Harrison, Kickapoo and Wolverine Streets, but also exists in other areas of the community. The Future Land Use Plan proposes the area located north of the Shawnee Mall as the primary location for industrial activity. Other industrial locations are not proposed to be eliminated while industry continues to exist, however, promotion of industrial activity is proposed to be limited to industrial parks that offer:

- ◆ internal access to facilities along interior collector and local roadways instead of heavily traveled roads such as Kickapoo and Harrison Streets;
- ◆ an integrated mix of heavy and light industrial activity;
- ◆ design standards, particularly along the periphery of the industrial park that address issues such as landscaping, open space, screening, lighting, signage, access management and building materials;
- ◆ a commercial hub located at Wolverine and Harrison Streets that caters to needs of surrounding facilities;
- ◆ an integrated drainage system as opposed to individual retention areas that can be visually pleasing, environmentally friendly and better address storm drainage;
- ◆ potential incorporation of industrial activity that is developed through partnerships between education and the private sector, such as a construction facility for development of affordable, modular housing.

#### *AIRPORT DISTRICT*

Shawnee Municipal Airport is an important economic feature of the City of Shawnee. Building upon increased activity already occurring around the airport, the Future Land use Plan proposes





to expand commercial and business opportunities in the area to enhance airport use. District features include:

- ◆ a mix of commercial office and retail activities, limited industrial development, and institutional activities such as the airport;
- ◆ a mix of airport-related commercial and industrial activities along Kickapoo Spur;
- ◆ enhancement and expansion of recreational amenities such as the trail system that is adjacent to the airport;
- ◆ design restrictions that respect the needs of the airport, such as height and lighting, while also considering such features as location of parking, shared infrastructure, signage and landscaping;

#### *TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS*

While Shawnee will maintain its small town character, it is important to also take full advantage of features such as the Gordon Cooper Technology Center that can establish Shawnee as a resource for skilled, talented labor. The Technology Center provides a unique opportunity for the City of Shawnee to build upon the proximity to Oklahoma City, as well as the various additional amenities of the community, to establish a small technology campus. The proposed campus stretches from Harrison Street to property west of the technology center. The technology campus is proposed to feature:

- ◆ a mixed use environment featuring commercial retail and office, and institutional uses, with limited light industrial or high density residential activity assuming that such uses can be completely integrated into campus design. The campus should focus upon integration of education opportunities with businesses practices.
- ◆ walkability within the campus setting that will serve to further strengthen the tie between education and business.
- ◆ aesthetic open spaces that are prominent in a campus setting with facilities planned for interconnectivity.
- ◆ clear and delineated boundaries, but also compatibility and coordination with surrounding districts, such as the proposed Uptown District.

#### *HARRISON COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR*

The Future Land Use Plan recognizes that commercial development is most effective as a land use when clustered to permit shopping and employment opportunities without the need for multiple trips. At the same time, the commercial strip along Harrison Street has grown steadily over the years and has consumed a significant portion of the roadway with strip

development. Given the magnitude of strip commercial activity along Harrison Street, it is extremely unlikely that the area will return to residential use. Likewise, if left unattended, the distinct possibility exists that the corridor will eventually decline as commercial activity moves to clustered commercial districts such as those proposed around the Shawnee Mall and downtown.

The Future Land Use Plan proposes to address these issues by introducing a dynamic mix of uses into the corridor and establishing Harrison Street as a separate and recognizable district. Specifically, the Harrison Commercial Corridor is proposed to include properties adjacent to Harrison Street from 45<sup>th</sup> Street to Whitaker Street. Features of the Corridor include:

- ◆ an array of land uses ranging from commercial retail and commercial office to low, medium and high density residential development;
- ◆ pedestrian opportunities by increasing density along the corridor and promoting commercial clusters in appropriate areas such as the intersection of Harrison and Independence Streets;
- ◆ shared use of facilities such as multistory structures with first floor commercial activity;
- ◆ improved and shared parking and access to promote traffic safety, walking and interconnectivity while also creating space for landscaping and beautification;
- ◆ improved signage and overall reduction of visual clutter; and
- ◆ recognizable features to act as gateways at the entrances into the corridor along Harrison Street.

#### *EXTENDED EDUCATION CAMPUS*

Coupled with the Gordon Cooper Technology Center, Oklahoma Baptist and St. Gregory's Universities offer a distinction to Shawnee as a small town with an immense capacity for higher education that should be attractive for both obtaining a degree or for continuing education. The Extended Education Campus is proposed to protect the expansion capabilities of the two universities while also surrounding the campuses with compatible residential development. The Extended Education Campus includes:

- ◆ public and semi-public land uses that primarily include the two universities, but also incorporate medical facilities or other future public uses that are related to university activity.
- ◆ low and medium density residential development that is connected to the universities through pedestrian and vehicular corridors including streets, sidewalks and trails.





- ◆ an enhanced campus setting through use of open space and vegetation that creates a pedestrian oriented atmosphere while also defining the campus as a single entity with the universities as nodes and specific structures as landmarks.

#### *ENHANCED EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS*

While new residential development is needed in Shawnee, strong consideration should be given to protection and enhancement of existing neighborhoods. The Future Land Use Plan proposes the following activities related to existing neighborhoods:

- ◆ use of vacant parcels for infill residential development and neighborhood park space as needed. New housing should not strongly differentiate from the surrounding housing stock in terms of size, style and type of housing. However, incorporation of appropriately designed alternatives such as duplexes and flats should be considered appropriate.
- ◆ elimination of uses that negatively impact the residential environment such as deteriorating or out of place commercial or industrial activity. Higher density residential activity should be limited, if permitted, and required to compliment the character of the surrounding low density residential area.
- ◆ incorporation of complimentary uses, including parks, schools, places of worship, and appropriately placed neighborhood commercial facilities that add amenities and a dynamic character to existing neighborhoods. Such uses should be placed in a manner that connects or clusters multiple destinations for access by walking, bicycling or by automobile.

#### *NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL NODES*

In an effort to promote clustered commercial retail and services that successfully meet the needs of the surrounding area, the Comprehensive Plan proposes a series of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes. As noted in *Figure 4.1*, nodes are located throughout the community at strategic intersections. Some, like the node proposed at the corner of Harrison and Wolverine Streets, enhance existing commercial clusters while others anticipate future development. Nodes promote the concept of clustering over strip development and once again seek to establish commercial centers as connected destinations.

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes feature:

- ◆ commercial retail and service activity that may include such daily needs as cleaners, gas stations, convenience stores, hair care, or coffee shops. Nodes may also include larger retail needs such as grocery stores, but are primarily designed for smaller shops that serve the needs of the immediate area.
- ◆ a reflection of the needs of the particular area. For example, the proposed node along Kickapoo Street near the Expanded

Education Campus may include a copy center while a node near the Airport District may include a sandwich shop to serve nearby employees.

- ◆ the scale and design of each node should equally reflect the surrounding activity. Two story structures with pedestrian amenities may be appropriate near the universities but less appropriate in other areas.

#### *TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT*

Several areas throughout and nearby Shawnee are currently experiencing significant residential development pressure. Unfortunately, the various new subdivisions are providing little in the amenities and interconnectivity needed to transform from a series of subdivisions to recognizable, dynamic neighborhoods. Areas designated as Traditional Neighborhood Development seek to enhance typical development by incorporating many of history's successful amenities and attributes. Specifically, Traditional Neighborhood Development includes:

- ◆ areas that are primarily low-density single family residential, but also permit low-density multifamily activities such as duplexes, granny flats and townhomes. Incorporation of multifamily uses should be planned and developed in a manner that complements surrounding single family activity.
- ◆ amenities such as parks, schools, places of worship and limited, appropriately placed neighborhood commercial activity.
- ◆ characteristics that promote pedestrian activity, including incorporation of trails and sidewalks, preferably connecting residents with amenities and destinations.
- ◆ potential use of traditional design concepts such as streets designed in a grid pattern, reduced front yard setbacks, and lot sizes that permit stronger association with the street and sidewalk.

#### *RURAL VILLAGES*

Rural Villages are proposed along the fringes of the City of Shawnee as a transition between the small town, urban environment and the surrounding rural area. Rural villages maintain the agrarian atmosphere through creation of tight-knit villages surrounded by open space as an aesthetic and character-driven alternative to typical strip residential development that ultimately benefits relatively few while requiring increased costs for service and maintenance. Features of Rural Villages include:

- ◆ residential activity that clusters homes and preserves a significant portion of a site as rural open space that can be used for recreation, actively farmed (with proceeds from leasing the land going to the cost of maintaining the common





space), or converted to low maintenance natural habitat. The benefit for homeowners is the ability to achieve the “escape” from urban living without maintaining a large personal space. Clustered homes require reduced infrastructure costs that result in reduced construction costs over the short term and reduced maintenance over the long term. Additionally, the large open area better preserves rural character without reducing the number of potential lots for development.

- ◆ village design that offers the creativity and flexibility to adapt to any scale of development. One rural village may be comprised of four homes while another is made up of more than 100 units. Rural villages may include a variety of housing types, including single family residences, duplexes, townhomes and apartments. If a village is built with significant density, neighborhood commercial uses may be integrated into the development. Similarly, uses such as places or worship, schools and recreation areas can serve as village landmarks.

#### *AGRICULTURAL HOLDING AREAS*

The Future Land Use Plan recognizes that even significant growth will not require consumption of all land currently within the boundaries of the City of Shawnee. It is recommended that, to the extent possible, land retain its rural character until needed for managed growth. This will preserve the boundaries of the community, further defining and maintaining the small town and rural character that so many in the area consider to be an important and marketable feature of Shawnee. This will also ensure that development occurs in a cost effective manner and continues to provide a barrier between activities such as the commercial and residential development along Interstate 40 and the industrial park along Wolverine Street.

#### **FUTURE LAND USE MAP**

The land use categories displayed on the Future Land Use Map differ from the City’s Official Zoning District Map. Together with policies, goals, objectives, action statements, and the concept of recognizable character districts, the Future Land Use Map is a guide for development, redevelopment and daily decision making. Categories for the Future Land Use Map have been designed to capture the character of distinct areas such as the Downtown District and Harrison Commercial Corridor and reaffirm a commitment to vibrant neighborhoods that are safe from inappropriate encroachment. In all cases, the Future Land Use Map supports appropriate mix of land uses. The level of mix and “appropriateness” is derived from the expected character of the area. For example, low density, single family neighborhoods benefit from incorporation of schools, parks and places or worship into the area, as well as limited, well designed,

neighborhood commercial activity. The Future Land Use Map does not specifically set aside areas in each neighborhood designated as “Public” or “Commercial” to accommodate those uses. Rather, each definition describes uses that are appropriate. Areas such as the Harrison Commercial Corridor benefit from a substantial mix of residential and commercial land uses. To recognize this, mixed use categories such as “Residential/Commercial” have been created.

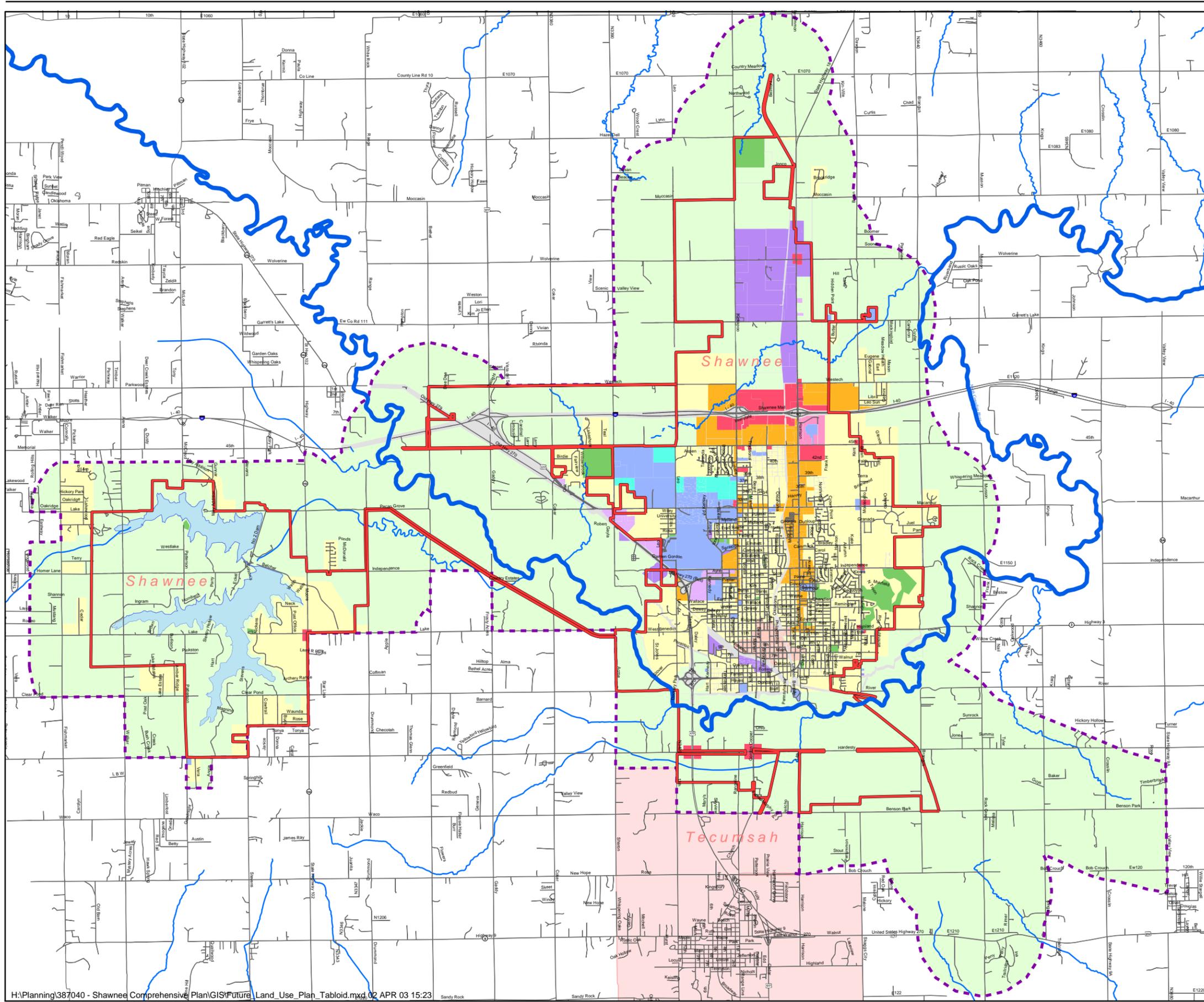
The following categories are used in *Figure 4.2, Future Land Use Plan*:

*RURAL DEVELOPMENT/AGRICULTURE (LIGHT GREEN):*  
Rural Development represents uses that are typically associated with “rural character,” particularly agricultural activity and natural areas. Rural development may include large lot residential development, although new large lot residential development should be minimized. Commercial or industrial activity that is of a small scale and directly related to agricultural activity is generally considered permissible. Agricultural Holding Areas are districts most closely associated with the Rural Development/Agriculture land use category.

*RESIDENTIAL (YELLOW):*  
Within the Residential category, conventional one-family detached dwellings represent the primary use, although two-family units such as duplexes and “granny flats” are acceptable throughout the area. Public uses such as places of worship, schools, parks, and other neighborhood-oriented public facilities are acceptable throughout the area, assuming that they are designed to respect and enhance the character of the community. When appropriate, other uses may include multifamily residential activity and neighborhood commercial. Rural Villages, Traditional Neighborhood Development and Enhanced Existing Neighborhoods are districts closely associated with the Residential land use classification.

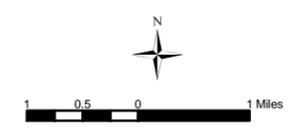
*RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL (ORANGE):*  
Substantially mixing uses creates a more dynamic environment that promotes interaction and walkability. The Residential/Commercial category is located in areas where a dynamic mix is likely to flourish and also as a transition between predominantly residential and commercial areas. Residential uses include all housing types, although medium to high density housing is considered most appropriate. Commercial activity in such areas may include commercial retail, service and office functions. Institutions such as places of worship, lodges and meeting halls are appropriate in the Residential/Commercial area. Large scale, “big-box” uses are preferred to be located outside of Residential/Commercial in areas designated for pure commercial





**FIGURE 4.2  
FUTURE LAND USE  
MAP**

- Future Land Use**
- Rural Development/  
Agriculture
  - Residential
  - Commercial/  
Residential
  - Commercial
  - Residential/Public/  
Commercial
  - Public/Commercial
  - Public
  - Residential/Public
  - Industrial  
Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Parks/ Open Space
  - Right of Way
  - Lake
  - 2003 Shawnee City  
Limits
  - Planning Area



Note:  
A comprehensive plan shall  
not constitute zoning  
regulations or establish  
zoning district boundaries.

# CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





use, unless designed to be successfully integrated with the surrounding area. The Harrison Commercial Corridor and portions of the Uptown District are closely associated with the Residential/Commercial land use category.

*COMMERCIAL (RED):*

Commercial areas are designed to specifically promote commercial retail and service activities, although they may also include office uses. Common uses in the commercial area will include shopping and service facilities for the sale of goods and services, including small shops and larger retail stores and centers, restaurants, hotels and motels, service stations, and various other customer-oriented establishments. Large scale, “big box” retail is most appropriate in the Commercial areas, particularly in the area along Interstate 40 near the Shawnee Mall. The Uptown District is the only district associated with the Commercial land use category.

*RESIDENTIAL/PUBLIC/COMMERCIAL (PEACH):*

The Downtown District is representative of the Residential/Public/Commercial land use category and represents a substantial blend of uses found only in the central core of a community. The category is recognition that a myriad of uses are both appropriate and necessary for success of the Downtown District. The appropriate mix of uses may include government facilities and offices, retail, office and medium to high density residential activity. Places of worship, meeting halls and other public/semi-public facilities are equally appropriate to this particular category. The dynamic mix of uses will continue to provide downtown Shawnee a character that is unique in comparison to other areas of the community.

*PUBLIC/COMMERCIAL (PINK):*

The Public/Commercial land use category is designed to facilitate the Technology Campus including and surrounding the Gordon Cooper Technology Center. The category promotes the relationship between education facilities such as the Technology Center and various office and complementary commercial activities needed to create a technology campus. Limited light industrial and high density residential activity may also be appropriate to the technology campus if all potential conflicts are appropriately mitigated, although such activities should be minimized and must be integrated into the campus design. Daily commercial retail and service activities such as grocery stores or “big box” retail centers are not compatible with the Public/Commercial land use category, particularly as proposed to support the Technology Campus.

*PUBLIC (BLUE):*

The Public land use category recognizes the substantial presence of facilities such as the two universities, Shawnee Municipal Airport, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, and the Expo Center in the community of Shawnee. Uses compatible with the Public land use category include government facilities, educational institutions, medical facilities, and semi-public uses such as places of worship and meeting halls. The Future Land Use Plan recognizes that several, small scale public facilities such as community centers, schools and swimming pools are appropriately located in predominantly residential areas outside of the Public land use category. The Expanded Education Campus, Airport District and Technology Campus are all associated with the Public land use category.

*RESIDENTIAL/PUBLIC (AQUA):*

The Residential/Public land use category addresses the transition and interrelationship between public uses such as the two universities and the potential for surrounding residential development. The Residential/Public land use category may include public uses such as education facilities, meeting halls, fraternal organizations and activity centers mixed appropriately with residential development. Residential uses may include single family neighborhoods with limited multifamily presence. The Expanded Education Campus is associated with the Residential/Public land use category.

*INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL (LIGHT PURPLE):*

Several areas throughout Shawnee have the opportunity to benefit from both commercial and industrial development. Sites along Old Highway 270, particularly in the area of the proposed Airport District, offer access to Interstate 40 and air service. In many cases, an appropriate mix of uses such as industrial assembly and support commercial activity also enhances both businesses. The Industrial/Commercial land use category is most directly associated with the Airport District.

*INDUSTRIAL (PURPLE):*

Significant portions of Shawnee are set aside for industrial activity, although in instances such as the grain processing facilities in downtown, the classification is recognition of an industry that may not be in the most desirable location, but would have difficulty moving or departure would result in unwanted consequences such as leaving a large facility vacant and unutilized. The majority of proposed new industrial activity is focused north of Shawnee in the area proposed as the Industrial Park. Uses associated with industrial activity include manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, distribution, or maintenance of products. Heavy industrial activity is often also





accompanied by outdoor activity areas or storage. Limited, associated commercial activity may be appropriate.

#### *OTHER USES*

Limited additional uses that appear on the Future Land Use Map represent existing uses that will continue to be utilized or expand, but do not represent all such uses. Location of Parks and Open Space will be dictated by the Parks Master Plan, including a new regional park to be located along Kickapoo Street north of the Industrial Park. Parks and Open Spaces will also be reflected in the direction of residential growth as parks are placed within new neighborhoods. Likewise, Right-of-way is categorized as a land use but also represents only existing rights-of-way. Future areas will be set aside as additional development occurs.

### **FUTURE LAND USE POLICIES**

Shawnee can grow sensibly by balancing economic development and environmental protection, focusing new development where public services and utilities are already available, actively supporting redevelopment of older areas and vacant buildings, valuing its traditional downtown and vibrant mixed-use areas, maintaining an efficient street network and infrastructure systems, providing convenient neighborhood shopping and attractive parks, and ensuring pedestrian-friendly commercial districts and walking connections between neighborhoods, parks and schools.

Through effective land use planning and urban design, Shawnee can fulfill its paramount responsibility to promote the public health, safety and welfare while also providing predictability in the development process.

Policies serve as a guide and reference for planning officials and City staff and should be utilized when making decisions regarding future development. In particular, policies should be utilized in implementing goals, objectives and actions, and in reviewing zoning classification changes or amendments to the Future Land Use Plan. The following policy statements reflect sound land use planning practices and are intended to supplement the Future Land Use Plan Map.

#### **IN GENERAL**

- ◆ Neighboring land uses should not detract from the enjoyment or value of properties.
- ◆ Potential negative land use impacts (noise, odor, pollution, excessive light, traffic, etc.) should be considered and minimized.
- ◆ Transportation access and circulation should be provided for uses that generate large numbers of trips. Pedestrian and bicycle access should be addressed where appropriate.

- ◆ Compatibility with existing uses should be maintained. Well planned, mixed uses which are compatible are to be encouraged.
- ◆ Sensitive areas such as woodlots, wetlands and high-quality farmland should be protected and, when appropriate, utilized as amenities.

### **RESIDENTIAL**

- ◆ Schools, parks and community facilities should be located close to or within residential neighborhoods.
- ◆ Residential and commercial areas may be adjacent or mixed if all impacts are appropriately addressed, including provision of a buffer, if needed.
- ◆ Houses should have direct access to residential streets but not to primary streets.
- ◆ Houses should not be adjacent to major highways.
- ◆ Neighborhoods should be buffered from primary streets.
- ◆ Residential developments should include adequate area for parks and recreation facilities, schools and places of worship.

### **RETAIL/OFFICE**

- ◆ Neighborhood retail and service uses should be placed appropriately to accommodate pedestrian traffic or otherwise located at intersections or along the edge of logical neighborhood areas.
- ◆ Retail development should be clustered throughout the City and convenient to residential areas.
- ◆ Buffers should separate retail/office uses and residential areas if designed to perform as separate districts.
- ◆ Downtown should be the major focus of government and related office activities and should be considered an appropriate location for retail, entertainment and residential activities, particularly through adaptive reuse of existing structures or redevelopment of vacant or industrial use parcels.
- ◆ Office and professional uses should be compatible with nearby residential areas and other uses through appropriate building height limitations and adequate buffering and landscaping.
- ◆ Low-intensity office and professional uses should provide a transition between more intense uses and residential areas.

### **COMMERCIAL**

- ◆ The City's commercial areas should include a range of development types to serve regional as well as local needs, from large commercial developments to smaller, free-standing commercial sites.





- ◆ Commercial development should be concentrated in nodes at intersections and along major thoroughfares that are designed and constructed to accommodate heavy traffic.
- ◆ Parcels should be large enough to accommodate commercial use.
- ◆ Commercial uses with more intensive operational or traffic service characteristics should be located away from most residential areas.
- ◆ Buffers should separate commercial accessories such as storage or display of merchandise or materials from residential areas.

### **INDUSTRIAL**

- ◆ Industrial development should have good access to truck routes, hazardous material routes, railroads and the Shawnee Municipal Airport.
- ◆ Industrial uses should be targeted in selected industrial development areas.
- ◆ Industrial development should have good access to primary streets and major highways.
- ◆ Industrial development should be separated from other uses by buffers.
- ◆ Industrial development should not be directly adjacent to residential areas.

### **PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**

- ◆ Parks should be evenly distributed throughout the City and include larger community parks and smaller neighborhood parks.
- ◆ There should be linkages between parks, schools, employment centers and residential areas.
- ◆ Parks are a desirable use for floodplain areas.
- ◆ Parks and open space may be used to buffer incompatible land uses.
- ◆ Natural features should be used as buffers or open space between or around developed areas.

### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

- ◆ Community facilities should be located adjacent to major streets to accommodate traffic.
- ◆ Community facilities should be centrally located in easily accessible areas within the community.
- ◆ Downtown should be enhanced as a civic and cultural entertainment/tourism center.
- ◆ Community facilities should be well buffered from nearby residential areas.
- ◆ When appropriate, facilities should be clustered and shared to improve efficiency, such as schools, parks and libraries.





# CHAPTER FIVE

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

### INTRODUCTION

Housing is an issue of particular importance to the City of Shawnee because of its vital role as a source of shelter, but also as a symbol of quality of life and personal pride. Likewise, neighborhoods offer an image of community pride and speak significantly to the “character” of an area – and its residents. A well maintained neighborhood with an active street life often provides the perception of caring, communication, safety, integrity, health, and family values.

Desirability of a neighborhood is based upon a number of variables, particularly those related to the local housing stock. For housing to be attractive it must be:

- ◆ **Affordable** to the extent that a household can cover the costs of purchase, maintenance, utilities and other regular expenses at an acceptable rate;
- ◆ **Adequate** to meet the needs of households in terms of living spaces, open space, amenities, and infrastructure;
- ◆ **Accessible** without undue hardship which may, on an immediate scale, include handicap accessibility and, on a larger scale, provide quick access to destinations for work, shopping or recreation;
- ◆ **Appealing** to the investor, homeowner or renter because it is well maintained, in an attractive location, new, historic, or otherwise offers a distinct or desired character; and,
- ◆ **Quality** in its materials, construction and maintenance.

Housing is certainly not the only characteristic that is important in the desirability of a neighborhood. Potential and existing homeowners and renters will be more attracted to areas that include:

- ◆ Quality **infrastructure** such as well-maintained streets, curbs (in urban settings), and storm drainage;
- ◆ **Identity** through gateways, defined edges, landscaping, lighting, signage, architecture, other streetscape amenities, or history;
- ◆ Dynamic **character**, particularly pedestrian activity such as, walking, bicycling, open communication, and children playing;
- ◆ **Proximity** to amenities such as parks, schools, churches, daily shopping, work opportunities; and,
- ◆ **“Curb appeal”** of maintained landscaping and other features that indicate active and attractive upkeep.

The purpose of the Housing & Neighborhoods element of the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan is to ensure that area homes and neighborhoods meet the current and future needs and requirements of residents. To do so, housing should be affordable, adequate, appealing and of sound quality. Neighborhoods should offer quality infrastructure, a strong identity, dynamic character, proximity to amenities, and curb appeal.

## KEY HOUSING ISSUES

Residents and leaders of Shawnee have raised a number of issues that play a role in the ability to provide an exceptional living environment. These issues form the basis for goals, objectives and action statements regarding housing and neighborhoods.

**Provide Affordable Housing.** New homes currently under construction are beyond affordability for most Shawnee residents. At the same time, statistics indicate that a number of current homeowners spend a significantly smaller percentage of household income toward housing costs than the national average. This indicates that a gap exists in the housing supply for households willing to spend more, but unable to afford houses at the current new construction prices. It also indicates that quality homes that commonly filter to lower income households are being consumed by moderate income households, leaving low income families to acquire housing that may be substandard.

**Diversify Beyond Affordability.** The existing housing stock is largely comprised of single family detached homes and apartment complexes. Addition of alternatives such as lofts, “granny flats”, and mixed residential/commercial development could fill gaps in





housing supply and better ensure the availability of “life cycle” housing.

**Maintain Pride in Home and Neighborhood.** Neighborhoods in Shawnee offer a distinctive character because of the era in which the majority of homes in Shawnee were built. However, age has also caused deterioration to occur and, in some cases, maintenance costs have begun to exceed the upkeep ability of owners. Aggressive revitalization efforts, combined with improvements such as pedestrian paths and sidewalks, can ensure that local neighborhoods remain dynamic and highly marketable.

**Create Quality Neighborhoods.** Recent housing developments in and around Shawnee offer gateways, but few amenities that create “neighborhoods” rather than subdivisions. While desirability of such subdivisions may be currently high, the value and quality of life is directly related to location and “newness.” Filtration of such subdivisions begins immediately following development of the next wave of new development. On the other hand, neighborhoods with numerous amenities tend to remain desirable for an extended period of time.

## HOUSING GOALS

The Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee utilized information gathered through data collection and public input to establish issues and develop goals for improving the area housing environment. Goals are designed to specifically address housing and neighborhoods, but also complement efforts to address other topics, such as land use, transportation, growth capacity, and image.

Relative to housing and neighborhood improvements, the City of Shawnee strives to offer:

- ◆ A community in which quality, affordable housing is available in sufficient quantity to all residents at all income levels;
- ◆ A variety of housing options that are attractive, adequate and available;
- ◆ Dynamic, well maintained, established neighborhoods that promote Shawnee as a community with history, character and pride; and,
- ◆ New development with the necessary amenities and design to become established, prosperous, interconnected neighborhoods.

## HOUSING OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

### PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**Goal One:** A community in which quality, affordable housing is available in sufficient quantity to all residents at all income levels

#### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Promote new housing that addresses the affordability gap – currently between approximately \$70,000 and \$120,000 for households between 80 percent and 120 percent of the median household income.
- ◆ Establish programs and acquire resources needed to improve housing affordability for households earning the median household income or less.
- ◆ Rehabilitate and improve existing quality homes while also maintaining the unique character of the housing stock.
- ◆ Introduce quality factory-built housing, specifically modular housing, into the mainstream market as a responsible method of addressing affordability, adequacy and availability issues.
- ◆ Address local barriers to affordable housing when provided appropriately.

#### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Aggressively coordinate with developers to reduce construction and development costs through assistance in land acquisition, infrastructure costs, pre-construction loans and other elements that impact the cost of housing.
- ✓ Promote alternative site design to achieve affordable housing, including zero-lot line development, reduced setbacks, reduced street widths, reduced lot size, mixed use development, cluster housing, and increased density.
- ✓ In coordination with research for the next Consolidated Plan, conduct a detailed housing condition survey to determine the quality of the existing housing stock and identify all substandard housing as visible from the exterior.
- ✓ Continue demolition of substandard and dilapidated housing with emphasis on the potential infill development and removal of structures along “identity” corridors.
- ✓ Enhance the capacity of Habitat for Humanity including emphasis on creating homes that complement surrounding community character.
- ✓ Encourage development of additional organizations to assist with housing improvements in both new construction and existing neighborhoods.
- ✓ Review ordinances to ensure that modular housing is treated as conventional, single family detached homes and simultaneously incorporate design criteria into ordinances that are applicable to all residents of Shawnee.





- ✓ Establish a partnership between builders, local lending institutions, local government and educational institutions such as the Gordon Cooper Technology Center to establish a modular housing industry in the community that provides affordable housing to Shawnee and the surrounding area while also creating new, skilled employment in the area.
- ✓ Pursue opportunities to acquire additional HOME funds to assist in programs such as downpayment assistance, homebuyer education and owner occupied rehabilitation.
- ✓ Seek coordination between local banks to create a revolving loan fund that can assist in homeownership assistance or housing rehabilitation.
- ✓ Revise ordinances to require manufactured housing communities to meet the standards of an enhanced, more flexible subdivision ordinance.

### **DIVERSIFY BEYOND AFFORDABILITY**

**Goal Two:** A setting in which a variety of housing options are available to meet specific needs

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Promote downtown housing opportunities, particularly for students, young adults, seniors, and those seeking “live-work” opportunities.
- ◆ Establish “life-cycle housing” as an essential component of subdivision design and reinvention of existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ Introduce a variety of alternative housing types into the Shawnee market as appropriate to improve affordability, adequacy and availability.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Utilize low interest loans and grant programs as a means to entice residents to invest in downtown mixed use activities that include residential units.
- ✓ Revise ordinances as needed to permit development of alternative housing types such as granny flats, row houses and multiple family homes in new development and existing neighborhoods.
- ✓ Provide density incentives to developers that are willing to incorporate alternative housing types into a new development.
- ✓ Educate builders, developers and the general public regarding the benefits of a diversified housing stock.

### **MAINTAIN PRIDE IN HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD**

**Goal Three:** An attractive housing stock within dynamic, well maintained neighborhoods that promote Shawnee as a community with character and pride

POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Empower residents through development of strong, active neighborhood associations.
- ◆ Develop neighborhood protection and upkeep projects and programs through area nonprofits, local government and neighborhood associations.
- ◆ Increase enforcement and improvement of housing-related codes and ordinances.
- ◆ Ensure that amenities are available to maintain marketability of existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ Promote infill housing development on vacant parcels as appropriate.
- ◆ Maintain interconnected paths and visual corridors between neighborhoods and other destinations.
- ◆ Ensure that quality neighborhoods are free of vacant lots and other potential risks to safety and community character.
- ◆ Coordinate with tribal leadership to address neighborhood revitalization as a shared source of pride and quality of life.

POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Seek out assistance through entities such as NeighborWorks and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) to assist in establishing a program to assist home owner associations/community development corporations in creation and self-sufficiency.
- ✓ Promote incorporation of deed restrictions or covenants into established neighborhoods along with development of an entity with the capacity of enforcement.
- ✓ Consider a “covenant campaign” in which residents of a neighborhood seeking added restrictions convince neighbors to voluntarily agree to restrictions.
- ✓ Develop a voluntary “neighborhood conservation” overlay district designed to place additional maintenance, character, use, and appearance restrictions upon properties within the district.
- ✓ Discuss the concept of annual rental registration requirement for all housing structures that will at least partially be available for lease. Registration should require an inspection of facilities prior to issuance of a permit.
- ✓ Enhance existing programs such as the owner-occupied rehabilitation program through partnership with other entities and increased funds through grants and foundations.
- ✓ Establish programs that local organizations can assist with that will improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, such as Crime Watch, neighborhood clean-up, assistance with code enforcement, programs for seniors and youth, and maintenance of public spaces and recreation areas.





- ✓ Examine code enforcement processes and regulations to ensure that enforcement is fair, expedient and utilized.
- ✓ Develop a neighborhood based Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) that corresponds to area needs, the community-wide CIP, ability to obtain funding through the budget or other resources, and, if available, neighborhood plans.
- ✓ Incorporate sidewalks into all urban neighborhoods and repair those that impede pedestrian access.
- ✓ Establish design guidelines that address issues such as materials, roof pitch, façade treatment, porches (if applicable), proportional dimensions, garage, and other elements necessary to ensure that new development and rehabilitation is consistent with the character of the area.
- ✓ Educate homeowners, apartment owners and other interested parties in the importance of home maintenance and its impact upon community quality of life, as well as property value.

### **CREATE QUALITY NEIGHBORHOODS**

**Goal Four:** New development with the necessary amenities and design to become established, prosperous, interconnected neighborhoods

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Protect rural character and reduce “strip development” through promotion of rural villages and other creative development techniques.
- ◆ Create pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods that are interconnected and within access to amenities such as parks, schools and daily commercial opportunities.
- ◆ Establish identity through strong focal points, gateways and “edges” in new neighborhoods.
- ◆ Promote proximity to major amenities as well as public facilities and services to minimize development costs and future public maintenance costs.
- ◆ Encourage development of neighborhood associations and private covenants in new developments.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Consider the use of incentives to entice development within or adjacent to established neighborhoods, including increased density, tax deferral, fee waivers, and a variety of other methods. Provide incentives to developers willing to develop adjacent to existing urban areas and to create points of interconnectivity, including streets, sidewalks, green spaces and paths.
- ✓ Avoid separation of residential areas through gated developments.

- ✓ Adjacent residential developments should be adequately linked with transportation arteries and pedestrian connections to encourage interaction and neighborhood mobility.
- ✓ Establish a land trust that can be charged with acquiring and managing lands placed under conservation easement.
- ✓ Create an option that rewards traditional neighborhood design or conservation subdivision techniques with increased density, reduced lot size, decreased setbacks, reduced street width and other measures as determined appropriate.
- ✓ Establish an area wide map that indicates primary conservation areas to be protected during subdivision design.
- ✓ Determine criteria for secondary conservation areas, conservation easements and concept plan approval.
- ✓ Revise ordinances as needed to allow for uncommon lot design in appropriate circumstances, including “flag” lots.

## SUMMARY OF MARKET DYNAMICS

As discussed at length in the Community Profile, the current housing supply and demand in Shawnee is driven by several key issues that indicate a tightening housing market, but with growing gaps in important areas. It appears that such gaps may be impacting the natural filtration and reinvention processes commonly associated with a healthy housing market, creating a demand for “affordable housing”, placing undue pressure on the existing low income housing stock, and possibly forcing some residents into substandard structures.

**The number of households is growing at a faster pace than the number of new units.** As indicated and well documented in the Community Profile, the housing stock in Shawnee grew at a rate of 7.4% between 1990 and 2000 compared to the 8.9% increase in households during the same time.

**Household income for the average Shawnee household is insufficient to purchase new housing in the community.** As previously noted, new homes in Shawnee average approximately \$128,000. In comparison and assuming no additional debt burden, the household earning the median household income (\$27,659) can afford to finance a home of approximately \$108,169 utilizing a conventional 30 year mortgage. As shown in *Table 5.1, Housing Affordability by Income*, the maximum home price declines considerably to approximately \$85,000 if the same household utilizes an FHA or VA program for financing. To afford to finance the average new home (\$128,000) a household must earn nearly 120 percent of the median household income –





for a conventional loan. To utilize FHA or VA financing programs, a household must earn at least 150 percent of the median household income.

**New housing is not necessarily “affordable”.** Common perception is that this price should be in the range that is affordable to the average potential buyer; however, this is not the case in Shawnee or in many other communities. Instead, the product produced by the majority of builders will be in a range that balances profit margin, costs, ability to produce a product, and demand.

Housing units can be built for more or less than the general area of balance but the builder increases risk. A homebuilder may choose to construct custom homes for high-income residents. The margin for profit will increase, but the number of units requested will also decrease. Additionally, if the economy sours,

**Table 5.1**  
**Housing Affordability by Income, 1999**  
**For Shawnee**

Percent of Median*	Household Income	Affordable Home Payment
180%	\$49,786	\$1,245
150%	\$41,489	\$1,037
120%	\$33,191	\$830
100%	\$27,659	\$691
80%	\$22,127	\$553
50%	\$13,830	\$346
30%	\$8,298	\$207

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates based upon determination of affordable monthly payment by the Department of Housing and Urban Development

Percent of Median*	Household Income	Maximum "Affordable" Sales Price		
		FHA Financing	VA Financing	Conventional Loan
180%	\$49,786	\$151,280	\$153,760	\$194,702
150%	\$41,489	\$126,069	\$128,136	\$162,255
120%	\$33,191	\$100,864	\$102,517	\$129,815
100%	\$27,659	\$84,045	\$85,423	\$108,169
80%	\$22,127	\$67,235	\$68,338	\$86,534
50%	\$13,830	\$42,024	\$21,054	\$54,086
30%	\$8,298	\$25,214	--	\$32,452

Source: Wilbur Smith Associates based upon "affordability calculator" available at [Hwww.ginniemac.gov/H](http://www.ginniemac.gov/H) assuming no minimum credit card payment, car payment or other monthly obligation

high-end housing is generally the first to slow. On the other hand, housing constructed below the balance provides reduced profit, must be produced at a higher volume that may saturate the market too quickly, and requires increased management of labor, materials and land.

It is unlikely that builders will move above or below the target market unless market demand shifts, the market becomes saturated, a new builder finds a preferred market difficult to

penetrate, or incentives are available that make a shift to a more “affordable” product more palatable.

**The significant gap between the average new home price and the average price for existing housing is a strong indicator that a gap in housing supply exists within the range of affordability for the average Shawnee household.** As a result, potential homeowners must make one of three choices – spend more than is affordable and upgrade to a new home, be content with a home that is below the desired price and amenity range, or move into a home elsewhere that better fits the family’s needs. Statistics show that a number of households are paying significantly less than the amount considered affordable, indicating that they have chosen to accept housing that is less expensive than they can afford.

**As a result, housing that should be filtered down is retained by those that could afford a higher priced home.** The number of available units shrinks to persons considered low income (80 percent of median household income according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development), very low income (50 percent of median household income) and extremely low income (30 percent of median household income).

**The tightening market for affordable housing is reflected in a shrinking vacancy rate for housing available for rent or purchase.** Despite a diligent campaign by City of Shawnee staff to remove dilapidated housing from the existing stock, it is likely that some households are forced to live in substandard housing or housing that is otherwise inadequate to meet their particular needs. Add to this that the number of students attending Oklahoma Baptist and St. Gregory Universities is growing and the pressure on the affordable housing market further increases.

Interestingly, it appears that the developers and builders are attempting to address some of the need for low income housing by taking advantage of Low Income Tax Credits available for those willing to establish a specific number of rental units for low and very low income households. However, it appears that neither the rental or owner market have taken additional steps to address the need at its core – the housing gap that exists for median income households.

## **HOUSING PROJECTIONS**

Demand for new housing, particularly affordable housing, is already concern for Shawnee residents. However, the need for new housing units will likely become more critical as the population of Shawnee continues to grow. The result may be a need for significant additional units and space.





Polynomial population projections for Shawnee, discussed in *Chapter 2, Community Profile*, of this Plan, propose a population increase of 14% between 2000 and 2010, as well as a 34.5% increase from 2000 to 2020. Assuming that the percentage of persons residing in households and the number of persons per household each remain constant, the number of households in Shawnee will roughly increase from 11,369 in 2000 to 14,400 by 2010 and 17,000 by 2020. This equates to a need for approximately 3,030 housing units by 2010 and 5,630 units by 2020 (if all new households require individual housing units).

Compared with current market dynamics, significant growth in households may result in a number of **possible** events, including:

- ◆ continued pressure upon available low income housing and existing vacant housing that may result in renovation and redevelopment of the existing housing stock or may result in individuals living in substandard homes;
- ◆ an increased number of households purchasing homes above their fiscal means;
- ◆ lack of appropriate housing results in decreased migration to Shawnee; or
- ◆ adjustments in the housing supply, including diversification of the housing stock, use of alternative construction methods, and utilization of alternative subdivision development techniques (such as zero lot line development and clustered housing) results in development of homes within the range of affordability.

Equally important for consideration of future development is location and space required to meet increased housing demand. Assuming an average of four units per acre, additional land consumed for new housing (including 15% additional land for infrastructure), constructing new homes for 5,630 households would require approximately 1,670 acres.

It is important to note that housing projections represent a **possible** outcome. In fact, a number of events will occur to impact population growth, household growth and, as a result, housing demand over the course of the next two decades. The importance in any projection, including a housing projection, is to raise awareness of a possibility that has a genuine probability of occurring. Both population and housing projections should be monitored for accuracy and relevance during the life of the Comprehensive Plan.

## IMPROVING HOUSING STOCK

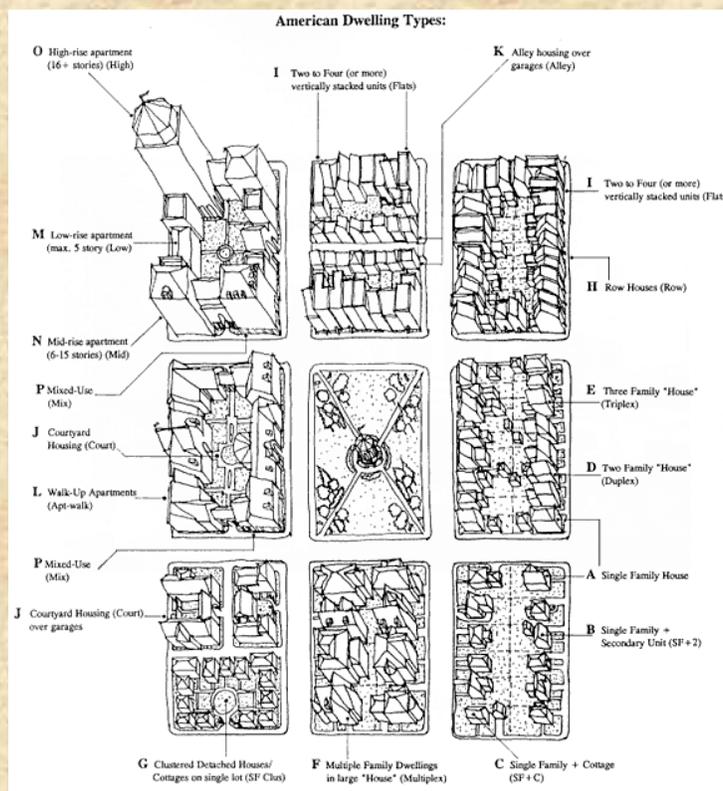
### HOUSING DIVERSITY

Shawnee’s housing stock is comparable to similar communities across the country in that it is almost exclusively comprised of two types of housing: single family detached homes and apartments. For the most part, existing housing follows traditional planning practices – a structure located in the center of a site with ample space for side yards, a front yard, and a rear area.

While not surprising, the lack of diversity in housing contributes to issues regarding affordability and adequacy. Diversity improves variety and allows for transition in housing to occur. In fact, authors Michael Pyatok, Tom Jones and Willie Pettus in their recent book titled, *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing*, indicate that American housing can be divided into 16 different categories, as shown in **Figure 5.1, American Housing Types**. While some of the types discussed, may not be as appropriate to Shawnee as others, the list of types exhibits the variety of housing options that are available beyond the traditional single family home or apartment complex. Placement of structures, as in the case of zero lot line development, can also impact the ability to provide homes more affordably.



**Figure 5.1**  
**American Housing Types**



Source: *Good Neighbors: Affordable Family Housing* and also available at [www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**Single Family House.** This category includes the traditional home associated with the American Dream. The structure is detached from and represents the only dwelling unit on a parcel. Most often, the single family home is located in or near the center of the site. Single family homes can be designed affordably by adjusting location on the site to allow innovative techniques such as zero lot line development, through alternative construction practices, home design, and financial incentives.

**Single Family House with Secondary Unit.** While the appearance remains similar to the simple single family house, this category includes space for a second unit within the structure that can be leased to individuals or families. Historic homes often designed secondary unit features into the structure in order to lease space or for use by domestic assistants. Home design eventually evolved away from this practice as leasing portions of a home became “undesirable.” Today the practice is being reconsidered as the benefits of placing renters in a single family environment and away from the social culture of apartments becomes apparent.

**Single Family House with Cottage.** Like the home with a secondary unit, accessory cottages were once commonplace and are only recently beginning to witness resurgence – thanks in large part to the move by “New Urbanists” to recapture many discarded, but useful, practices in housing. Commonly referred to as a “Granny Flat”, the accessory cottage or above garage apartment inserts renters into the stable environment of homeownership. Additionally, the unit provides added income to

the homeowner and makes the cost of the home more affordable.



Lake Park Townhomes in Klahanie, Washington

Source: [www.designadvisor.org](http://www.designadvisor.org)

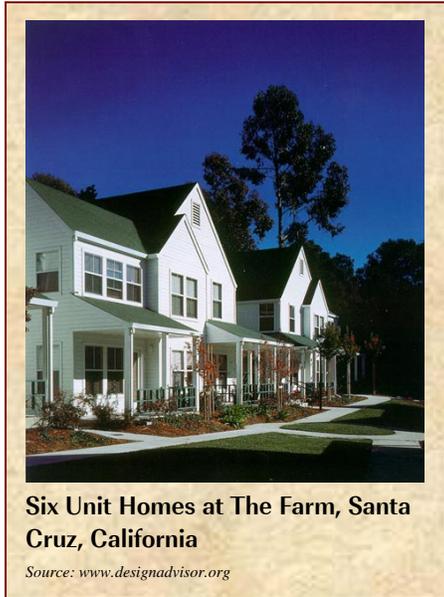
**Two Family Home.** Duplexes, unlike accessory structures and secondary units, remain a part of the current housing environment and a legitimate means of

generating affordable housing. Duplex construction is rare and almost never incorporated into new, large scale housing development. Duplexes can provide both rental and homeownership opportunities and, when designed as cluster housing, provide an outstanding housing alternative for seniors.

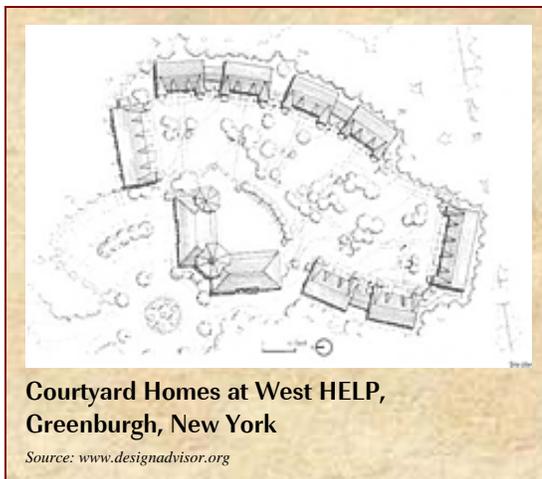
**Three Family Home.** Triplexes are fairly rare in today’s housing market; however, like duplexes, they provide a viable alternative

to the single family home. Triplexes, like duplexes, can be designed to appear as large scale single family structures with multiple stories and provide opportunities for both renters and owners.

**Multiple Family Home.** A larger variety than duplexes and triplexes, the multiple-family home can be designed to accommodate numerous households. While the scale of multiple family home design is too large to appropriately fit within established neighborhoods in Shawnee, it is a strong candidate for incorporation into new development.



**Row Houses.** Similar to duplexes, triplexes and multiple family homes, row houses offer the reduced construction cost that come with attached structures while also permitting a sense of independence. For a time, row houses fell out of favor as designers sought to move away from the gritty design of the urban environment. However, like other forms of housing, row houses have once again gained popularity as an option to single family homes and apartments.



**Flats.** While popular in other countries, such as Britain, flats – ownership or control of a substantial portion of a single story in a multiple story structure - have never been as abundant in the United States. Nevertheless, flats offer an additional

alternative when considering affordable housing opportunities.

**Courtyard Housing.** This category offers the benefits of a row house, with the added “twist” of entry through a courtyard. Courtyard homes may be incorporated into innovative development techniques to include playgrounds, a community center or a forested green space. Like Multiple Family Homes,





Courtyard Homes will likely not fit into established neighborhoods in Shawnee.

**Apartments.** Divided into four housing types (walk-up, low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise), apartments offer affordability through the reduced construction cost per unit and added density. As in Shawnee, apartment construction is sporadic with a tendency to be developed in quantity once sufficient demand is available. As a result, the market for apartment units tends to swing between need and saturation. Recent apartment activity in Shawnee has included large-scale, low income housing developed with the assistance of Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Residents indicate an overall acceptance of apartments into the housing market, but note that new units are not designed to meet the needs or expectations of households earning an income near or above the median.

**Mixed Use Housing.** Mix of uses was commonplace until separation of land uses through zoning and other mechanisms in order to address negative impacts on adjacent residents. Today, mixed use housing is making a tremendous comeback, particularly in areas such as downtown Shawnee that can offer a variety of commercial retail and entertainment activities and proximity to a variety of resources such as parks, schools and work. Rehabilitation and reuse of *The Aldridge* in downtown Shawnee is one model for mixed use activity. Once completed, the renovation will include over 60 residential units, first floor commercial activity, and a renovated upper floor ballroom. Other downtown structures are also undergoing transformation, including limited, above commercial, residential development.

### **A ROLE FOR FACTORY-BUILT HOUSING**

Factory-built housing has a historic reputation as a “cheap”, visually unappealing, temporary catalyst for decreased property value. “Mobile homes” and “mobile home parks” have created this negative connotation of factory-built housing. Over the course of several decades, however, factory-built housing has diversified and now has the capacity to be a very compatible neighbor to existing housing. Today’s factory-built housing has been improved to meet increasing demands for quality, safety, flexibility, and visual appeal while retaining affordability in comparison to traditional construction methods.

When developed in a manner appropriate to the expectations of the community, factory-built housing has the potential to provide quality, affordable housing and to effectively blend in and enhance the surrounding area. Efforts by the factory-built housing industry to meet the demands of homebuyers and communities while keeping homes affordable are paying off. In fact, in 2000 more than one in five new homes purchased in the United States was a

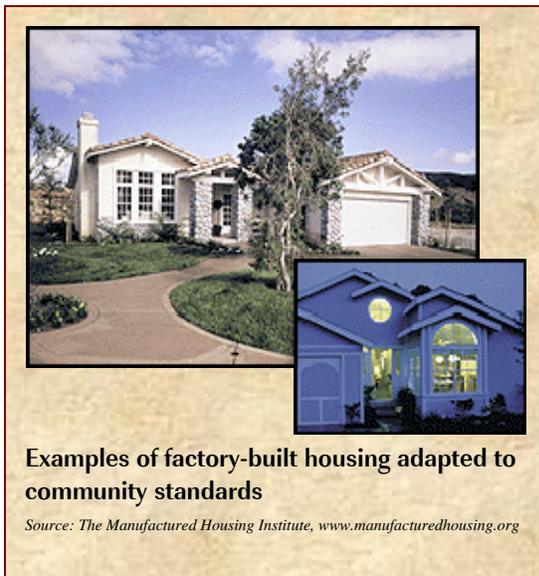
factory-built home. In fact, the National Association of Home Builders anticipates that, as the housing industry evolves, more new homes will incorporate prefabricated, pre-assembled materials.

*FACTORY-BUILT HOUSING DEFINED*

Factory-built housing is often wrongly associated with “mobile homes.” In fact, factory-built housing is comprised of a variety of construction methods ranging from manufactured housing – the successor to mobile homes, modular housing – a popular choice because of its closer ties to traditional construction, and a number of additional prefabrication processes.

**Mobile home.** Factory-built housing constructed prior to 1976, when Congress enacted the Federal Manufactured Home Construction and Safety Standards. Mobile homes were built upon a non-removable steel chassis and transported to the site on their own wheel and axle system pulled by a hitch. While the mobile home progressed throughout several decades, dwellings consistently suffered from poor construction and materials, as well as inconsistent engineering.

**Manufactured housing.** Manufactured housing is constructed entirely within the confines of a factory, removed from the elements. Such housing is constructed to the requirements of the “HUD Code” that was developed to ensure that homes transported across one or more states were held to a single, specific construction standard.



Examples of factory-built housing adapted to community standards

Source: The Manufactured Housing Institute, [www.manufacturedhousing.org](http://www.manufacturedhousing.org)

Once transported to a site, a manufactured home may be placed on a permanent slab or on a more temporary foundation. Generally speaking, the wheels and hitch are removed. In the case of a multi-section home, the portions of the home are attached at the site. Any structural additions to a manufactured home must meet local or state building requirements.

**Modular housing.** Modular housing is a hybrid between manufactured and traditional housing that commonly results in a home that meets or supercedes the quality of common “site-built” homes. The large majority of a modular home is





constructed in the stable environment of the factory and transported to the site by truck. Unlike manufactured housing, modular housing is not supported by a steel chassis and therefore cannot travel using its own “trailer hitch and wheels.” It is designed from initiation as a permanent home.

More important, modular housing is required to meet local building codes and other related regulations. This is particularly important in Shawnee because of the ability to require increased reinforcement against wind events such as tornadoes and straight line winds.

Modular housing is particularly popular in communities such as Shawnee that seek an alternative that meets unique, local construction methods but also offers an avenue to affordability. Modular housing is more expensive than manufactured housing, but it remains more cost effective than similar “site-built” housing.

**Panelized housing.** Also commonly known as “sectional housing”, panelized housing is constructed at the factory as a series of units that include windows, doors, wiring, plumbing, and other elements of the structure. Like modular housing, panelized housing is assembled on the site, but as a series of linked panels. Also similar to modular housing, the panelized home must be constructed to the local or state building codes within the state and location in which the home will be constructed on site.

**Pre-cut housing.** The final, factory-built alternative involves “pre-cut” housing that is only partially prepared at the factory. After all materials are cut in accordance with a specific construction schedule, they are packaged and delivered in a kit with all other components of the house to the location of the home. Beyond this, the pre-cut home is assembled in much the same manner as any other “site-built” home, but with greater efficiency. When completed, the home must meet all requirements of the appropriate local or state building code.

Other hybrid systems. As conventional, site-built housing and factory-built housing practices progressively intermingle, the housing industry continues to develop new, hybrid systems that seek to take advantage of the benefits of construction in a factory setting while adapting to the unique needs of the individual site. Concrete homes, for example, have been tested as an alternative for decades, however, it has only been recently that forms have been sufficiently developed that allow such homes to be developed effectively. While concrete homes benefit from significant reductions in heating and cooling costs, they are generally slightly more expensive to construct than conventional homes utilizing a wood or steel frame. A more recent

development, Structural Insulated Panel System (SIPS), applies a new technology to panelized housing by replacing traditional wall systems with a durable foam and frame system. While this system may become a viable option for future development, it is currently offered by only a few manufacturers with a very limited number of floor plans. Like concrete construction, savings is based on long term reduction in heating and cooling cost rather than initial price of purchase.

Other factory-built components are being successfully integrated into factory-built homes and, in some cases, site-built homes. Many of these components improve efficiency, but others impact aesthetics or cost. Engineered lumber and steel skeleton systems, for example, are proving to be viable alternatives to typical wooden framing. Hinged roof systems allow manufactured housing to now meet differing pitch requirements.

#### *MAINTAINING AFFORDABILITY*

The misperception is that factory-built housing is “cheap” because materials and quality of construction are below those of “site-built” homes. Materials can, and do, play a role in the cost of any home – including factory-built units. Manufactured housing, in particular, is able to reduce price through use of alternative materials, although it must still meet strict federal standards for construction. Modular housing, on the other hand, is expected to resemble – in appearance and use of materials – its “site-built” counterpart.

The majority of savings accrued through use of factory-built housing stems from the construction process. Factory-built housing resembles an assembly line approach that permits efficient construction under mass production conditions and without the concern for weather or vandalism. As indicated by the Manufactured Housing Institute, factory-built housing is also more cost effective because construction workers are trained specialists that are not required to travel from one job site to the next or coordinate with other specialists, such as plumbers or electricians. Also, because of the mass production, assembly line approach, the factory is able to assemble more units and materials are purchased at a reduced rate.

The level of affordability obtained through use of factory-built housing is dictated by a number of factors, but it is most directly impacted by the amount of construction that can occur in the factory. For this reason, manufactured housing is often considered to be more affordable than its factory-built counterparts because less construction occurs at the home site. On the other hand, because manufactured housing is regulated by Federal standards, the City of Shawnee has less control regarding construction requirements of manufactured housing. As previously noted,





modular housing, on the other hand, is likely to be less affordable than manufactured housing, but it offers the benefit of increased control regarding construction requirements.

**Table 5.2 – National Cost and Size Comparison for New Manufactured Homes and “Site-Built” Homes, 1995-2000**, indicates the overall difference in the cost of purchasing an average manufactured home compared to its conventional, site-built counterpart. Of particular note, the average multi-section manufactured home was constructed at a cost below the needed housing market (noted as approximately \$70,000 to \$120,000). While modular housing and other factory-built techniques are likely to be more expensive than manufactured housing, it remains a viable product that can be developed within the targeted range of cost. More, the significant difference in cost

**Table 5.2**  
**National Cost and Size Comparison for New Manufactured Homes and “Site-Built” Homes, 1995-2000**

	1995	2000
<b>New Manufactured Home</b>		
<i>All Homes</i>		
Average Sales Price	\$35,400	\$46,500
Average Square Footage	1,360	1,505
Cost Per Square Foot	\$26.03	\$30.90
<i>Multi-Section Homes</i>		
Average Sales Price	\$44,300	\$53,900
Average Square Footage	1,575	1,675
Cost Per Square Foot	\$28.13	\$32.18
<b>“Site-Built” Homes</b>		
Average Sales Price	\$158,700	\$207,000
Less Land Price	\$34,575	\$44,700
Price of Structure	\$124,125	\$162,300
Average Square Footage	2,050	2,212
Cost Per Square Foot	\$60.55	\$73.37

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census as compiled by the Manufactured Housing Institute

offsets the ability or need to provide additional aesthetic and design improvements that allow modular housing to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

#### *STANDARDS FOR BOTH QUALITY INFILL AND REMOTE SITE DEVELOPMENT*

Countless ordinances across the country prohibit the use of factory-built housing in existing neighborhoods and subdivisions as a source of infill development. However, this trend is slowly changing as communities realize that factory-built housing has become a compatible alternative method of construction. What remains is for communities to ensure that quality and compatibility of character in neighborhoods is not sacrificed for the sake of affordability.

The City of Shawnee has already begun to consider steps toward permitting infill factory-built housing through compilation of

design standards. While these standards have not yet been implemented, they remain available for revision and action. These standards are specifically more appropriate to modular housing because of the desire to require “wind load” standards above those permitted by Federal regulations.

Visual appearance requirements may address:

- ◆ Installation upon a foundation that complies with state or local building codes;
- ◆ Length and location of the structure;
- ◆ Width of the structure (commonly at least 14-20 feet wide);
- ◆ Use of exterior materials that are consistent with surrounding residential structures, including color, texture and appearance;
- ◆ Roof construction with an acceptable pitch, overhang and materials (in some cases, the roof is required to be double pitched);
- ◆ Absence of transportation related items such as the wheels, axles and hitch;
- ◆ Landscaping that is consistent with the surrounding residential area; and,
- ◆ Construction of a garage, front porch or other feature that will add consistency with the surrounding area (and provide for enclosed storage of mowers, bicycles, etc.).

## RESOURCES AND PARTNERS

### FEDERAL PROGRAMS

**Community Development Block Grant.** The City of Shawnee is an Entitlement Community – one of very few in the country – that is below a population of 50,000 persons yet receives an annual allocation directly from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Unfortunately, the amount of funding available to the City of Shawnee is slowly declining as the number and need of new entitlement communities outpaces the amount of additional funds allocated to the CDBG program. In Program Year 2002 (beginning July 1, 2002 and ending June 30, 2003), the community was awarded \$539,000. In Program Year 2003, that amount was reduced to only \$494,000. CDBG is the only HUD entitlement program received by the City of Shawnee.

The City of Shawnee devotes the vast majority of its CDBG funds to housing. In 2003, a significant amount of available funds was utilized for owner-occupied housing rehabilitation efforts.

The Community Development Block Grant is one of the most flexible programs available through the Federal government and is considered by many to also be among the most successful. CDBG funds can be used for a variety of community improvements





designed to benefit low and moderate income individuals, reduce an urgent need, or eliminate slum and blight.

**HOME Investment Partnership.** Until 1998, the City of Shawnee was considered a Small Metro Set-Aside by the State of Oklahoma to correlate with its national status for CDBG funds. However, in 1998, the state government ended the Small Metro Set-Aside program and required cities such as Shawnee to compete for HOME funds. In 2001, the City of Shawnee was successfully awarded \$251,258 and in 2002, successfully awarded \$207,821 for housing purposes, including owner occupied rehabilitation.

HOME represents the single most significant housing exclusive grant available through the federal government outside of public housing assistance programs. HOME funds are available to provide a variety of housing measures to those in need, including down payment and closing cost assistance, homebuyer education (under specific circumstances), pre-construction loans, rental assistance, and rehabilitation funds.

Although the City of Shawnee has considered entering into a HOME Consortium to again receive an annual allotment of funding, no action is expected in the foreseeable future.

**Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly.** Designed to assist very low income persons that are 62 years or over, Section 202 provides rental assistance that can be applied to multifamily construction. In addition to rental assistance, Section 202 funds can be used for initial project funds that do not require repayment as long as the structure continues to provide reduced rent for the elderly (at minimum 40 years). The City of Shawnee has not received any Section 202 funds and is not eligible to compete but may actively coordinate with a nonprofit partner.

**Section 811 Supportive Housing for the Disabled.** Similar to Section 202, Section 811 meets the special needs of the disabled by allowing rental assistance for multifamily structures. Capital advances are permitted in the same fashion as Section 202. The City of Shawnee has not received any Section 811 funds and is not eligible to compete, but may actively coordinate with a nonprofit partner.

**Youthbuild.** This program is designed to be multifunctional. While the primary goal is to provide at-risk youth with professional and social skills, it also results in development/rehabilitation of affordable housing. Through Youthbuild, young adults are trained in marketable construction and repair skills that are then used to spur community revitalization. The City of Shawnee has not coordinated to pursue

Youthbuild funds, however ongoing coordination between Gordon Cooper Technology Center and Habitat for Humanity is expected to result in a grant application in 2004.

**Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program.** This program is the primary means of directing private capital towards the creation of affordable rental housing. Developers of low-income rental housing use the tax credit to offset a portion of their federal tax liability in exchange for the production of affordable rental units. To qualify for the tax credit, either 20 percent or more of the project's units must be rent-restricted and occupied by individuals whose income is 50 percent or less of the median family income; or, 40 percent or more of the units must be rent-restricted and occupied by individuals whose income is 60 percent or less of the median family income. Recent apartments developed in Shawnee have been the result of the LIHTC program. A more innovative program is currently in initial stages of planning that would involve development of infill, scattered site rental housing built upon vacant parcels throughout Shawnee with assistance through the LIHTC program.

#### *PUBLIC HOUSING*

The Shawnee Housing Authority maintains an active role in the provision of housing for low income residents throughout the community. The Housing Authority currently manages six facilities with a total of 441 units. Additionally, the program manages vouchers and certificates for 411 units.

To further its ability to achieve its mission, the Shawnee Housing Authority has formed a nonprofit with plans to become a Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) for utilization of HOME funds and to facilitate affordable housing development.

#### *OTHER ENTITIES*

**Habitat for Humanity.** The only active nonprofit entity dedicated to housing in the City of Shawnee, Habitat for Humanity has struggled to find clients, despite the obvious demand. Recent innovative partnerships, such as coordination with the Shawnee Housing Authority to move Family Self-Sufficiency program graduates into homeownership may bridge the gap.

**Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency (COCAA).** Once an active Community Housing Development Organization, COCAA is working toward once again becoming a CHDO.

**Indian Housing Authorities.** Little interaction occurs between housing entities involved with the City of Shawnee and the various housing authorities for the sovereign nations of Native



American Indians. However, Indian Housing Authority funds are permitted to be used in the City of Shawnee.

## IMPROVING NEIGHBORHOODS

### REINVIGORATE EXISTING NEIGHBORHOODS

The majority of neighborhood reinvestment strategies deal with renovation of the housing stock. However, a strong redevelopment program must focus on the fact that neighborhoods are more than housing. A thriving, dynamic neighborhood requires a number of characteristics beyond an adequate housing stock.

**Active and organized residents.** Simply put, without a strong and active effort by neighborhood residents and business owners it is extraordinarily difficult to develop a successful revitalization effort. Key to community participation is organization. In many new communities, homeowner associations keep residents informed of important information and represent the neighborhood in major issues. In older, established communities, this role is often more challenging because tremendous effort is needed to organize, build excitement and gain long term participation. Often, neighborhood groups form with assistance from area churches, nonprofit organizations or other entities that have the financial and structural capacity to support and nurture the group through infancy and startup “growing pains”. Many of the more effective organizations establish Community Development Corporations designed specifically for revitalization. Still others specialize to become Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDO) that act as local housing developers or Community Based Development Organizations (CBDO) that promote area economic activity.

In Shawnee, one community group, the Dunbar Heights Community Group, has effectively organized and assisted the City of Shawnee in making housing improvements.

**Edges, Nodes and Landmarks.** From the design perspective, a neighborhood should function as a recognizable district. Edges to the neighborhood should be clearly delineated through community character; themes in signage, landscaping or lighting; and gateways. The neighborhood should also include quality gathering places – nodes such as a neighborhood park, community center or school. A number of these items can be developed by a community organization, usually in partnership with the public sector, through private fundraising, grant writing and local “sweat equity”.

**Quality Infrastructure.** Water, wastewater, storm drainage, roadway systems, and sidewalks – pedestrian paths that are



sorely lacking in Shawnee – that are in sound condition and well maintained are among obvious features that require strong public support. While the majority of systems in Shawnee appear to be in good condition, the lack of sidewalks dramatically reduces the likelihood of pedestrian activity.

**Investment Potential.** A dynamic neighborhood is always seeking ways to upgrade the value and quality of life for residents. In several neighborhoods in Shawnee, local government has ownership or control of numerous vacant, underutilized and dilapidated parcels that are scattered throughout existing neighborhoods. These parcels provide a strong opportunity to inject needed investment into the community including infill housing, park space or other resources needed by the community. A local organization, such as the nonprofit partner of the Shawnee Housing Authority or a local community development corporation, has the opportunity to assemble available parcels and coordinate with other parties to meet needs in the community. A similar concept is currently under proposal by the Shawnee Housing Authority that would develop affordable, scattered site housing on available vacant parcels.

**Partnership.** The quality of Shawnee’s neighborhoods is important to a number of parties. Organizations such as local businesses, charitable organizations, civic groups, churches, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, organizations representing local Native American Indian tribes, and the two universities are all potential partners for projects such as neighborhood clean up, neighborhood watch, landscaping, home improvements, painting, sidewalk construction, organization assistance, and research. Partners offer time, funds, materials and experience that would otherwise be unavailable.

**A Vision.** Neighborhoods have a particularly difficult time moving from organization to action because, generally, residents have not developed a plan for action. To move forward in a manner that maintains excitement and focus, the neighborhood requires a simple, targeted implementation plan. For areas that qualify, the Department of Housing and Urban Development offers an innovative program known as a *Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy* as an incentive for neighborhoods to plan ahead. As an extension of the Consolidated Plan for the City of Shawnee, an approved Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy specifies neighborhood improvement projects, dedicates resources to completing those projects and provides a timeline for redevelopment. In return, rules regarding housing improvements and job development are relaxed.





## CREATE NEW NEIGHBORHOODS

New residential development in Shawnee is typical of predominant subdivision development. Many of the key ingredients needed to build a sense of “home” or “neighborhood” such as internal nodes and a strong theme are absent. Connectivity and location adjacent to other development is overlooked while distinct edges are established by barrier fences and gateways. Layout is designed exclusively for the convenience of automobile traffic traveling in and out of the area as opposed to pedestrian traffic traveling within the development.

On the other hand, in rural areas, development is sporadic. A significant amount of residential activity occurring outside Shawnee represents strip development consuming roadway frontage for land that is currently used for agricultural purposes. Strip development not only devours valuable frontage, it also reduces the usefulness of internal agricultural areas and blemishes the rural character of the surrounding area. Strip development surrounds Shawnee, but it is most significant along roadways near Twin Lakes.

In both cases, the tendency is to grow away from existing urban activity and resources. The result may be short term successes, but sprawl, we now realize, comes with substantial cost to the community, particularly relative to the cost of services and infrastructure necessary to maintain an expected quality of life.

Prior to sprawl, expansion occurred in a dense pattern adjacent to other development, thus ensuring that infrastructure such as streets, water, and wastewater occurred in a systematic and cost-effective fashion. Likewise, government services such as law enforcement, fire protection, schools, libraries, parks and general administration remained concentrated.

In *From Sprawl to Smart Growth*, Robert Freilich provides examples of the substantial costs associated with sprawl. He notes that the Urban Land Institute, in a study comparing sprawl conditions to those of traditional development, concluded that the combined costs of sprawl added as much as \$48,000 to the cost of a home. In another instance a community indicated that their ability to collect approximately \$2,100 in taxes per household was roughly \$1,600 less than necessary to adequately cover services.

Two alternative development patterns, Traditional Neighborhood Development and Conservation Subdivision Techniques offer the opportunity to replace traditional subdivision design with a pattern of development that is more appropriate to establishing a sense of neighborhood and better respects local character.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Many of the established neighborhoods of Shawnee offer an overall character that is unique to the community. For the most part, these neighborhoods follow the traditional grid pattern. Houses in much of Shawnee have a “Craftsman” era appearance, complete with a front porch as entry into the predominantly one and two story structures.

While established areas of Shawnee may not capture everyone’s image of appropriate design, they carry many of the same characteristics that communities across the country are realizing have been lost through modern subdivision design.

Traditional neighborhood design recognizes the benefits of a time-honored approach to issues such as density, open space, street width, pedestrian-friendliness, amenities, mixed-use development, design, scale, and compatibility with surrounding areas. The primary focus, however, is upon the ability to walk from one destination to another, usually in less than 10 minutes.

Other characteristics of traditional neighborhood design include:

**Focus on the neighborhood as a single, connected, functioning unit that is part of the community of Shawnee.** As a single unit, each neighborhood should offer evident definition. The boundaries or edges of the neighborhood unit should be recognizable, but not impassible. An edge need not indicate that every neighborhood in Shawnee act as a fortress, but rather as a clearly recognizable entity.

**Each neighborhood should have a focus.** As discussed, a node can be a gathering point, such as a park, community center, school, or daily commercial activity. The node, like edges and gateways, should be obvious and should include the character necessary to make it unique or important to the particular neighborhood.

**Pedestrian and vehicular movements are equally important.** It is not possible or desirable to eliminate automobile traffic; on the other hand it is possible to make opportunities for pedestrian or bike travel more enticing. Sidewalks should complement narrow streets that reduce scale and increase safety. Sidewalks and trails are instrumental to the success of neighborhood design.

**Uses within a traditional neighborhood design are mixed to allow for nonresidential activities such as commercial establishments, schools and open spaces.** Housing is particularly mixed to support a wide variety of housing needs. As a rule, those living in higher density housing may wish to be closer or incorporated into commercial opportunities.





**Traditional neighborhood design is compact with a variety of green spaces as relief.** Generally, lot sizes may be smaller than are standard in a modern subdivision ordinance as are setbacks. In return, traditional neighborhood development offers passive and active green spaces that may be granted to the City of Shawnee or privately maintained.

Benefits of Traditional Neighborhood Design include:

- ◆ Creation of additional parks and preservation of open spaces throughout the community.
- ◆ Increased density and proximity to services, which reduces the cost of infrastructure and provision of public services.
- ◆ Development containing characteristics of historic “small town America” that are considered aesthetically pleasing and appropriate to the character of Shawnee.
- ◆ More efficient utilization of space and greater compatibility with the surrounding environment.
- ◆ A variety of housing options in a single location such as single family homes that may or may not include a secondary unit or granny flat, row houses, and multiple unit homes, among others in order to more closely meet the range of needs of potential residents.
- ◆ Mixed-use development incorporates residential and commercial activity, such as downtown buildings that offer residential units above street level commercial retail and service establishments.
- ◆ Pedestrian-friendly environments designed to decrease dependence on the automobile.
- ◆ Increased “social capital” as more opportunities for interaction between households build the genuine feeling of “neighborhood” often missing in conventional subdivisions.

#### *CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION TECHNIQUES*

The rural character of Shawnee, including the Twin Lakes area, is an integral component of the small town character of the community. Strip residential development from agricultural “sell-offs” threaten the character of the area. At the same time, however, farmers have the right to sell property for the purposes of residential development. Unfortunately, the short term benefit of strip development for the farmer is eventually overwhelmed by the long term impacts such as increased traffic along roadways, conflict between residential activity and farming activity, and the inability to offer roadway frontage for future, larger scale investment. *Conservation Subdivision Techniques* offer a compromise that permits the farmer to sell a portion of property and successfully and sensitively integrates open space and agricultural activity into residential development.

The concept behind Conservation Subdivision Techniques is simply to achieve the same number of units allowed on a site, but reduce the lot sizes and cluster the houses in order to achieve efficiencies and creativity in design. By allowing the developer to place units closer together, cost is saved in terms of the amount of road and infrastructure to be constructed, land to be cleared, and storm drainage capacity to be installed. Further, open space is preserved, which could be used for parks, natural areas, protected floodplain, or simply remain as agricultural area.

Conservation Subdivision Techniques tend to create compact, rural “hamlets” with a strong sense of identity and character. Additionally, the homeowner is able to reap the benefits of surrounding open space without the demands and liability of ownership. More, Conservation Subdivision Techniques take advantage of the strengths and weaknesses of an individual building site. Contours and views can be accentuated to add aesthetic character to the development and profit to the developer. Meanwhile areas such as floodplains, wetlands, and areas of historic significance can be utilized for open space.

Conservation Subdivision Techniques generally follow a four-step process:

**Identify primary conservation areas within the site.** Primary conservation areas represent areas unsuitable for development such as floodways/floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, or other areas of significance that are deemed inappropriate for development by the City of Shawnee, such as prime farmland or forestland. These areas are not considered a part of the buildable area of the site when calculating the number of units that may be developed.

**Identify secondary conservation areas within the site.** Secondary conservation areas represent areas that are buildable but contain special features that the developer or the community would like to see preserved. These may include forestland, prime farmland, and special view sheds that add character to the development or even areas that the developer wishes to avoid for the benefit and marketability of the project. Secondary conservation areas are included in determination of the allowable number of units because conservation areas are a “wish list” of items that the developer or the community would like to have remain, but are not required to keep. Both primary and secondary conservation areas should be drawn on a concept plan for consideration in placement of units. In accord with the clustering concept, Conservation Subdivision Techniques generally require that a percentage of the site be set aside for open space. If so, the sum total of the primary and secondary conservation areas should be equal to or greater than the amount of open space required.





**Calculate and place the number of units that may be developed on site.** This is calculated in accordance with the Subdivision Ordinance (as revised to permit alternative site designs) and may be based on a minimum lot size or on a number of dwelling units per acre. Once the appropriate number of units is determined, they are placed upon the site clustered according to appropriateness to the site. Lot lines and streets are not placed until the appropriate location of units has been determined. Decisions are made at this time regarding the need and the extent to which secondary conservation areas are to be encroached upon. Open space requirements may limit the amount of areas designated as secondary conservation areas that can be removed.

**Lot lines and streets are added to the development and the final concept is developed.** Lot lines are placed with little regard to concerns that are commonplace in most subdivision ordinances such as irregular lots or flag lots. Efficiency and desirability of design take primary precedence.

Benefits of Conservation Subdivision Techniques include:

- ◆ Preserving open space and rural character.
- ◆ Arranging development in clusters to reduce impact upon the environment.
- ◆ Encouraging condensed development that allows for overall added units per acre while delaying build out.
- ◆ Targeting specific conservation sites of interest for preservation and for use as parklands, trails or natural areas.
- ◆ Reserving some open space as “holding areas” to allow for more dense development as the community continues to expand. In this manner, Conservation Subdivision Techniques act as a temporary compromise between traditional development patterns and typical sprawl.
- ◆ Producing quaint village or hamlet themes reminiscent of historic rural America.
- ◆ Offering opportunities to apply conservation easements to ensure that open space and agricultural areas are maintained and preserved.



# CHAPTER SIX

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## TRANSPORTATION

### INTRODUCTION

The ultimate goal of the transportation plan is to increase the quality of life with a better, more efficient transportation system. While the network of streets throughout the City of Shawnee is the largest part of the whole system, there are many other aspects that need evaluation including sidewalks and trails, air and rail travel, roadways and highways of multiple governmental agencies, and coordination of transportation with both existing and future land use.

Most cities depend upon vehicles for transporting both people and goods. The plan for Shawnee improves the overall flow of vehicle travel in and around Shawnee while meeting a variety of mobility, economic, social, and environmental objectives.

### KEY TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

**Expand Non-Vehicular Circulation.** Throughout the process of gathering community input, the issue of adequate pedestrian and bicycle facilities continually surfaced. With two first-class universities, and a growing population of over 28,000, a network of non-vehicular paths is important for the progress and attraction of Shawnee. Shawnee is home to a number of amenities such as, St. Gregory's University Oklahoma Baptist University, the Expo Center, Shawnee Mall, downtown and other event generators that are dispersed throughout the area. Pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and major attractions is important to foster a community feel and provide a healthy, environmentally friendly alternative to automobile transportation.



While sidewalks are present in some areas, improvements enhance their function and provide American Disabilities Act, ADA, compliance with more clearance and additional ramps. Two of the major arterials through the city are state highways and multi-governmental coordination of efforts could lighten the burden of expenses.

**Coordinate Land Use and Transportation.** The capacity and design of Shawnee’s transportation system has a direct impact on local quality of life. The ability of the roadway system to evolve and meet changing development patterns is key to maintaining a mobility network that is effective and free of significant congestion. Along local streets, where the local government has its greatest measure of control, Shawnee can regulate the location, layout and design of land development relative to the roadway, transit and sidewalk networks. However, coordination with ODOT and other area governments plays a bigger role on larger roadways.

Transportation improvements also have the capacity to guide the overall pattern of development of Shawnee. Improvements to specific areas may promote development activity whereas intentional lack of improvements in other areas can help to preserve resources, manage growth and preserve the sense of small town character.

Reservation or acquisition of sufficient right-of-way, including land needed for new roadways, expansion of existing roadways, relocation of utilities, and development of trails and paths make future growth more manageable. Continuous coordination with land use will not only save time and money, but also provide ease in design and construction of new facilities and infrastructure.

**Enhance Roadway Efficiency.** The transportation system is always judged by its ability to move volumes of traffic efficiently between destinations. However, efficiency means more than volume. An effective system offers a myriad of characteristics, but is generally safe for all users, easy to navigate, accessible, and operating within its anticipated/desired parameters. Streets need to be easily maneuverable and safe with controlled speeds and directive signage. Consistent traffic violations (such as speeding and ignoring traffic signals), poor access management, frequent collisions and congestion raise the ire and concern of residents and risk altering travel patterns. Safe access to businesses, schools, and homes must be maintained.

Statements from residents identified signage as an issue that is unclear or not present for destinations throughout the city. “Visual clutter” and billboard regulations also are concerns as unattractive and numerous signs plague the arterials. This issue will be covered extensively in later discussion in the **Image & Design Element**, however, it is equally important to transportation for improved safety and “wayfinding” – the





# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

system of signage and markers that allow residents and visitor navigate through the city with relative ease.

**Feasibility of Public Transportation.** The elderly, disabled, low-income population, and students, among other residents, currently must rely on Central Oklahoma Transit for public transportation. The system runs from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and provides handicap accessible rides. There is no set schedule so users must contact Central Oklahoma Community Action Agency (COCAA) to request service, also called demand-response service. Coordination of services and needs with COCAA for Central Oklahoma Transit to obtain optimal assistance for the community is currently the most feasible solution. A system with various routes and scheduled stops visiting downtown, shopping areas, universities, neighborhoods, industrial areas, the airport, and other places of interest would be a great asset to the community. However, population and physical size does not warrant and would have difficulty supporting such a system.

The convenience of being close to Oklahoma City makes Shawnee a prime area for commuters. Many residents expressed an interest in a train system running between Shawnee and Oklahoma City. This type of transportation has been implemented in larger cities; however, a major funding source would be needed for the project, especially right of way and construction. A more attractive, short term (and significantly cheaper) alternative for commuters is the formation of a “car pool” that encourages ridership and coordinates vehicular grouping to desired locations.

**Strengthen and Support Multimodal Transportation.** Shawnee offers a number of transportation alternatives for goods, materials, services, and people including streets, air travel, and railway services. Shawnee Municipal Airport (SMA) is very progressive, with large improvements over the last six years and continually working toward further development. The airport services an array of aviation related businesses such as corporate, general, and commuter travel, and a variety of aviation related job training.

Missouri, Kansas & Texas (MK&T) as well as Atchison, Topeka, & Santa Fe Railroad (AT&SF) transect the city through vital industrial areas including downtown and the northern industrial park. The railroad system initiated growth of The City of Shawnee in the early 1900’s and is still used for a great amount of agricultural and industrial activity. Currently an MK&T bridge over the North Canadian River is out of service, restricting access to the southeast part of Oklahoma and beyond. As additional movement of cargo by train occurs, analysis of safety at grade crossings must be performed to ensure safety and reduce delay.

**Increase Thoroughfare Capacity.** A large section of the population commutes to Oklahoma City; therefore local roads and highways are

critical to the livelihood of this community. The grid system of Shawnee provides safe travel through town along arterial and collector streets. Upgrades and access management would drastically enhance the movement in congested areas such as Kickapoo Street from Interstate 40, I-40, south, 45th Street, and Harrison Avenue from I-40 south. A suitable roadway and signed connection between greater Shawnee and Twin Lakes along Benedict Street and Lake Road is a great opportunity to expand recreational and tourist attractions, among other advantages. Overall improvements could include increasing roadway width, utilizing access management principles, inserting traffic signals where warranted, and increasing capacity. The corridors connect important nodes and are vital to the traffic movement and future development of Shawnee.

## TRANSPORTATION GOALS

Members of the community expressed concern for many aspects of transportation flow and safety. The goals, actions, and objectives for this element reflect and build on input received and further develop issues anticipated with future growth. A flexible approach must be used to evolve with other areas of the Comprehensive Plan including land use and housing and neighborhoods.

A clear, practical, and flexible approach to transportation improvements ensures that Shawnee offers:

- ◆ A strong network of pedestrian paths that provide convenient, safe and efficient access between neighborhoods, schools, destinations, and businesses.
- ◆ A transportation system that encourages good urban form and capacity for growth.
- ◆ Focus on transportation features beyond traffic flow and carrying capacity, such as safety, convenience, access, and ease of navigation.
- ◆ A diverse network of air, rail, and road transport for efficient movement of goods and services produced, stored or sold in the Shawnee area.
- ◆ An efficient thoroughfare framework to aid in future growth and ease unnecessary travel hindrances through town.

## TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

### EXPAND NON-VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

**Goal One:** A strong network of pedestrian paths that provide convenient, safe and efficient access between neighborhoods, schools, destinations, and businesses.



*POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Expand and enhance sidewalks throughout town that connect neighborhoods with schools, universities, downtown, parks, and commercial opportunities.
- ◆ Pursue improvements that enhance pedestrian safety and increase interconnection between neighborhoods and businesses.
- ◆ Develop a trails system complementary to sidewalks that can be implemented by phases as funding becomes available.

*POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Develop a phased plan of pedestrian path improvements to include sidewalks and hike/bike trails.
- ✓ Reserve or acquire land for future trail construction in coordination with the parks master plan and Future Land Use Plan.
- ✓ Provide sidewalk standards and require adherence to appropriate specifications (street classification, width, offset distance from roadway, one or both sides of street, continuity, etc.).
- ✓ Evaluate and improve, as needed, pedestrian crosswalks, signage, school zones, handicap ramps, curb cuts, and pedestrian timings at signalized intersections, such as Kickapoo & MacArthur, Union & MacArthur, and Union & Highland Streets.
- ✓ Perform an assessment of current conditions of sidewalks and prioritize improvements by connectivity and level of use.
- ✓ Coordinate with universities to determine appropriate pedestrian corridor locations.
- ✓ Work with Oklahoma Department of Transportation, ODOT, Pottawatomie County, and local Tribes, including the Citizen Potawatomi Tribe, Sac and Fox Nation, Kickapoo Tribe, and Absentee Shawnee Tribe, to provide sidewalks on all arterials.
- ✓ Assess accident reports, concentrating effort in areas with high vehicle-pedestrian collisions and make needed improvements.
- ✓ Research and target possible funding options for pedestrian improvements such as special assessment districts, block grants, transportation enhancement funds, and public-private partnerships.

**COORDINATE LAND USE & TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal Two:** A transportation system that encourages good urban form and capacity for growth.

*POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Analyze needs of existing businesses and neighborhoods for possible improvements.
- ◆ Recognize the importance of roadway and streetscape improvements to areas of future development along I-40 and downtown as well as activity taking place in undeveloped areas.

- ◆ Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan as a guide as to which areas of transportation necessitate expansion to encourage development as well as other capital improvements vital to the success of target areas.

*POTENTIAL ACTIONS*

- ✓ Utilize the Thoroughfare Plan and consider traffic impacts during review of zoning changes, subdivision applications, and site development to ensure functional integration of new streets with existing arterial and connector street system; interconnected street systems between adjacent developments, as appropriate; and multiple points of ingress/egress for large subdivisions.
- ✓ Require developer participation in producing traffic impact studies and mitigations actions for large scale development proposals.
- ✓ Refer to the Thoroughfare Plan for new development to ensure efficient integration, easily accessible entrances and exits, and connections between developments.
- ✓ Coordinate roadway, utility, and other infrastructure improvements with new development.
- ✓ Periodically review the City's Thoroughfare Plan and consider amendments as necessary to maintain consistency with the Future Land Use Plan, zoning, and other development related ordinances.

**ENHANCE SAFETY & USABILITY**

**Goal Three:** Focus on transportation features beyond traffic flow and carrying capacity, such as safety, convenience, access, and ease of navigation.

*POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Replace visual clutter and current standards with an organized "wayfinding" system.
- ◆ Maintain an effective and updated Thoroughfare Plan to ensure continuity and efficiency of the street system and use as a reference for new construction and re-development.
- ◆ Ensure a balance between access, efficiency and safety in the transportation network.

*POTENTIAL ACTIONS*

- ✓ Develop guidelines, standards and incentives to reduce visual clutter along Shawnee roadways such as Harrison Street.
- ✓ Initiate a proposal to develop a "wayfinding" system that displays the unique character of Shawnee and clearly guides motorists through the city.
- ✓ Analyze capacities and collision reports for major intersections and roadways to determine necessary modifications of geometry, signage, and other details to make for safer travel.





- ✓ Use traffic calming measures in areas of high pedestrian activity or locations exhibiting high speed, volume, rate of collision, or cut through traffic.
- ✓ Encourage use of access management principles along arterials and other congested roadways such as medians and openings, auxiliary lanes, appropriate driveway design and quantity of adjacent entrances.
- ✓ Work with ODOT for signage along highways.
- ✓ Coordinate efforts with ODOT, Pottawatomie County, and local Tribes as needed to ensure that the goals and objectives of the Transportation Element are met.
- ✓ Coordinate meeting with Shawnee Police Department to discuss increased monitoring and enforcement of laws against speeding, traffic light violations and other problems that reduce the safety of the roadway.

### **STRENGTHEN & SUPPORT MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION**

**Goal Four:** A diverse network of air, rail, and road transport for efficient movement of goods and services produced, stored or sold in the Shawnee area.

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Enhance the viability of Shawnee Municipal Airport.
- ◆ Increase circulation along heavily traveled cargo routes for trucks and the traveling public.
- ◆ Coordinate efforts with railroad entities to ensure safety and communicate expected expansion of facilities.

#### *POTENTIAL ACTIONS*

- ✓ Update airport master plan to guide improvements to existing facilities, runway expansion and increased attraction of new business, travel opportunities, and job possibilities.
- ✓ Upgrade roadways adjacent to the airport, industrial park and connecting I-40 to include appropriate roadway material and widths to service heavy truck traffic including Federal Avenue to Kickapoo Street and Airport Drive from Independence Street to MacArthur Street.
- ✓ Determine growth needs of the air and rail system to provide for expansion of transportation and product shipping services.
- ✓ Review and modify truck routes as needed.
- ✓ Require business parks to provide internal roadway access and single entry points for major roadways such as Kickapoo, Wolverine, and Harrison Streets.
- ✓ Encourage appropriate industry, agricultural warehouse, and shipping businesses to locate near railroad to lessen heavy truck traffic on city streets.
- ✓ Actively encourage replacement of the MK&T Railroad bridge over the North Canadian River.

## **INCREASE THOROUGHFARE CAPACITY**

**Goal Five:** An efficient thoroughfare framework to aid in future growth and ease unnecessary travel hindrances through town.

### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Increase capacity of major corridors and intersections.
- ◆ Upgrade highway entrances and exits.

### *POTENTIAL ACTIONS*

- ✓ Explore alternative solutions to the current configuration of Kickapoo Street from MacArthur Street south and utilize access management principles from I-40 south to Main Street.
- ✓ Delegate 45th Street as the major east/west arterial through Shawnee by expanding the roadway and intersections from Bryan Street to the airport.
- ✓ Upgrade the route from Kickapoo Street to Twin Lakes along Benedict Street and Lake Road to collector qualities and classifications.
- ✓ Pave roads in the Twin Lakes area such as Belcher Road, Post Office Lane, and Nickens Road.
- ✓ Consider construction of a new overpass for Bryan Street over I-40.
- ✓ Upgrade Union, Independence, and Highland Streets to minor arterial status and character.
- ✓ Improve the entrance to the Expo Center to handle event traffic flow.
- ✓ Upgrade access roads along I-40 to increase safety.
- ✓ Refer to the Thoroughfare Plan for classification or reclassification of existing or future roadways, as needed.

## **ESSENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The transportation plan includes a wide variety of issues, considering both short and long term goals. Improvements considered immediately essential are the upgrade of 45th Street, modification to Kickapoo Street, and improvement to Benedict Street and Lake Road leading to Twin Lakes. While these issues require a large amount of funding and are fairly large scale, they are vital to the overall health of the transportation system.

## **EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM**

Shawnee is a community that has been historically accessible. The railroad network forged the path to prosperity in an earlier age while, today, Shawnee is intersected by a major interstate. The following federal and state highways transect and border Shawnee and carry a large amount of traffic through the area.

**I-40** The interstate is four lanes and runs east to Ft. Smith, Arkansas and west to Oklahoma City and Amarillo. A large amount of freight truck traffic takes place on this interstate.





**US 177/270** Shawnee’s western edge is defined by US 177. The highway runs from the city south through Sulphur and north through Perkins.

**SH 18** Originating at Beard Street, State Highway 18 runs north through Chandler to the Kansas border. The highway follows Farrall Avenue then Harrison Avenue through Shawnee.

**Bus 270** Business route 270 through Shawnee originates and terminates at US 177/270. The highway runs east on Farrall Avenue, north on Beard Street, west on Highland Street, north on Kickapoo Street, and west to US 177/270. The path moves through the heart of downtown and adjacent to residential neighborhoods.

Many people move to Shawnee looking for the “small town” feel, high quality universities, proximity to Oklahoma City, and among other characteristics, a great sense of community. Making a community a pleasant place to live is a sum of many factors including not only transportation, but also land use, housing and neighborhoods. A city with the population and growth potential of Shawnee must thoughtfully prepare for the future. The expansion must include appropriate improvements to infrastructure that guides growth to desired areas.

**Table 6.1, Proposed Transportation Improvements in 2000-2001 Capital Improvements Program** displays a list of proposed transportation improvements and their status as included in the current CIP.

**Table 6.1  
Proposed Transportation Improvements in 2000-2001 Capital Improvements Program**

Improvement		Status
1	Union from 45th to Interstate 40	Completed
2	Traffic signal at Airport Drive and MacArthur	Designed
3	New entrance to Expo center from US 177	To Be Completed
4	Overlay streets	On-going
5	Rehab asphalt streets	On-going
6	Remington Street from Pesotum to Cleveland	Completed
7	Main Street from Harrison to Pesotum	Completed
8	Broadway from Midland to Independence	Completed
9	Close intersection of Independence and US 177	Completed
10	Concrete street rehabilitation	On-going
11	Widen and resurface Kickapoo from Uponor to Wolverine and Wolverine from Kickapoo to Harrison	Completed
12	Pave RV parking at Expo Center	To Be Completed
13	Resurface Kickapoo from Wolverine to Hazel Del	Completed
14	Industrial access road to Wolverine Industrial Park	To Be Completed
15	Relocate utilities to widen Highway 18	Completed
16	Pave existing parking lots at Expo Center	To Be Completed
17	Develop and construct a streetscape of Main Street from Beard to Philadelphia, Bell Street between Main and Highland, Union from Main to Highland, and Broadway from Main to Highland	Phase I Designed

## TRAFFIC VOLUMES

Average daily trips (ADT) give a good representation of the flow and distribution of vehicles. These traffic volumes assist in determining the ability of the system to serve the area's travel demands. The most recent available average daily traffic volume counts were obtained from the City of Shawnee and include counts from 1999 to 2003. An interesting trend in volumes, since 1999, shows that 70% of roadways have seen a **decrease** in traffic volume.

**Table 6.2, Shawnee 2003 Traffic Counts** clearly shows the significant traffic near the square mile of MacArthur, Harrison, Independence, and Kickapoo Streets. The

highest average traffic volume was 20,083 daily trips on Harrison Avenue at Federal Avenue. Areas seeing the greatest increase over a four year span were Union Avenue at MacArthur Street, US 270 Business at Kickapoo Street, and Union Avenue at 45th Street.

Classifications reflect the function that each road serves as part of the local street network. The cross section of a roadway is related to traffic volume, design capacity, and Level of Service. The 1993 Shawnee Comprehensive Plan classifies streets as Freeways, Major Arterials, Minor Arterials, Collectors, and Local Roads. Cross section requirements for each class of road are provided in the City's Subdivision Regulations. A summary of existing requirements is provided in **Table 6.3, Existing Roadway Cross Sections**. Each cross section identifies minimum dimensional criteria for right-of-way and pavement width. Recommended changes to these widths can be found in the Functional Classification of Roadways section of the Master Thoroughfare Plan.

**Table 6.2  
Shawnee 2003 Traffic Counts**

Street	Intersection	ADT
Harrison	39th	16,318
	45th	16,458
	Federal	20,083
	Highland	13,269
	MacArthur	17,893
	Main	1,183
	Wallace	16,055
MacArthur	Bryan	4,445
	Harrison	12,091
	Hospital	11,177
	Kickapoo	12,416
Kickapoo	St. Gregory	7,830
	36th	17,525
	Federal	15,278
	Main	4,820
Independence	Pulaski	15,567
	Bryan	3,188
	Harrison	10,693
Gordon Cooper	Kickapoo	9,951
	North of North Canadian River	13,479
Bryan	Highland	7,464
	Independence	8,124
	MacArthur	6,421

**Table 6.3  
Existing Roadway Cross Sections**

Classifications	Right-Of-Way*	Pavement Width*
Freeway	330	**
Major Arterial	120	50
Minor Arterial	100	50
Collector	60	32
Local	50	26

\*All distances in feet



## THE MASTER THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Thoroughfare system planning represents the process that is proposed for the Shawnee Comprehensive Land Use and Development Plan to assure development of the most efficient and appropriate street system to meet existing and future travel needs of the Shawnee planning area. The purpose is to ensure orderly and progressive development of the streets to serve mobility and access needs of the public. Thoroughfare planning is intrinsically interrelated with other components of the plan including land use and housing.

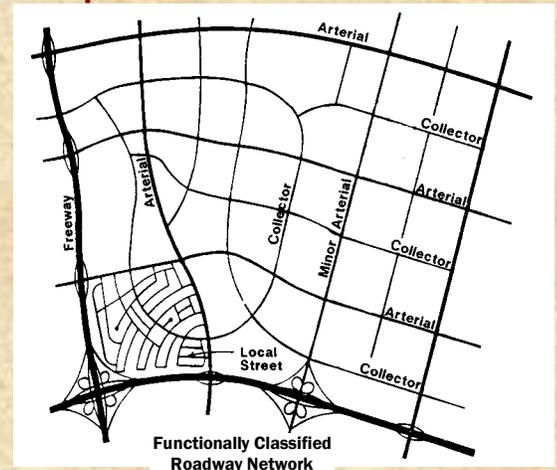
### MASTER THOROUGHFARE PLAN MAP

The existing and proposed thoroughfare system of principal and minor arterials and collector streets is displayed in **Figure 6.1, Master Thoroughfare Plan Map**. The Master Thoroughfare Plan Map shows approximate alignments for planned thoroughfares that will be considered in platting of subdivisions, right-of-way dedication, and construction for major roadways within the Shawnee.

Some pathways noted in the thoroughfare system will require new or wider right-of-way and may ultimately be developed as two-lane or multi-lane roadways with various cross sections. Others streets will not necessarily ever be widened due to physical constraints and right-of-way limitations. For constrained roadways, designation signifies their traffic-handling role in the overall street system and the importance of maintaining such streets in superior condition to maximize their traffic capacity since they most likely cannot be improved to an optimal width and cross section. The Plan does not show future local streets because these streets function principally to provide access and their future alignments may vary depending upon development plans. Local street alignment should be determined by the Shawnee Planning Commission, in conjunction with City staff and landowners, as part of the development process.

The Master Thoroughfare Plan will affect the growth and development of the Shawnee planning area since it guides the preservation of right-of-way needed for future thoroughfare improvements. As a result, the Plan has significant influence on

**Figure 6.2**  
**Examples of Functional Classification**



Various classifications of roads in a network are based upon intended function. However, the function and classification of a road may change over time as development patterns in the MPC Planning Area change.

*Source: adaptation by Wilbur Smith Associates*

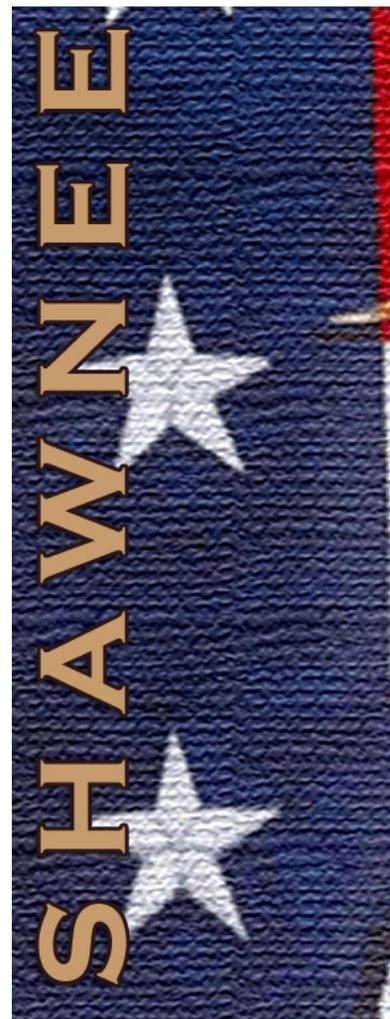
the pattern of movement and the desirability of areas as locations for development and land use. While other elements of the Plan look at foreseeable changes and needs over a 20-year period, thoroughfare planning requires an even longer-range perspective extending into the very long-term future. Future changes in transportation technology, cost structure, service demand and long-term shifts in urban growth and development patterns require a far-sighted and visionary approach to thoroughfare planning decisions.

### FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

The roads and streets of Shawnee are grouped into functional classes according to the type of service they are intended to provide in terms of traffic movement and access. Characteristics of each functional class of roadway differ as needed to meet the corridor’s intended purpose.

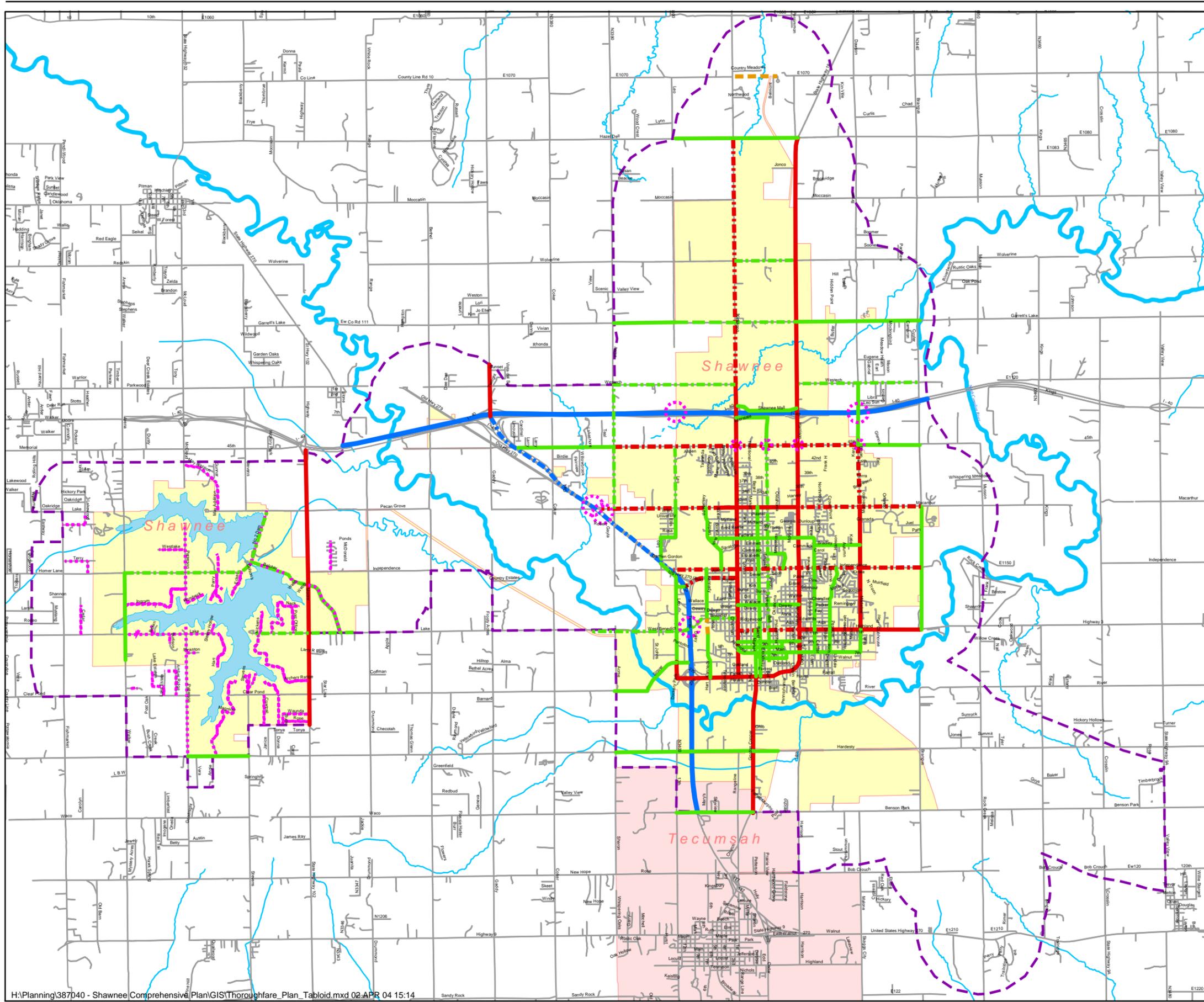
**Figure 6.2, Example of Functional Classifications**, includes Major Arterials, Minor Arterials, and Collectors. On a neighborhood scale, streets are further classified as Local Streets. **Table 6.4, Characteristics of Roadway Types** describes the differences between each classification.

In addition to standard street classifications, the Subdivision Regulations have classifications, including separate right-of-way pavement width requirements, for Major Arterial, Minor Arterial, Collector, and Local. The Master Thoroughfare Plan does not differentiate between local streets by assigning class. Instead, the Plan proposes that local street width and other characteristics be changed

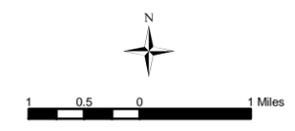


**Table 6.4**  
**Characteristics of Roadway Types**

Criterion	Freeway	Major Arterial	Minor Arterial	Collector	Local Street
Functional Role	Entirely through traffic movement with no direct access to property.	Mobility is primary, access is secondary. Connects Freeways and other Arterials.	Connects Freeways, Principal Arterials and lower-classification roadways. Access is secondary.	Collects traffic destined for the Arterial network. Connects Arterials to Local Streets. Also land access.	Access is primary. Little through movement.
Roadway Continuity	Inter-city, regional and interstate.	Connects Freeways to lower-classification roadways. Connect major activity centers.	Connect Freeways and Major Arterials to lower-classification roadways.	Continuous between Arterials. May extend across Arterials.	Discontinuous. Connect to Collectors.
Traffic Volumes	40,000 Vehicles per Day or more	20,000 to 60,000 VPD	5,000 to 30,000 VPD	1,000 to 15,000 VPD	100 to 5,000 VPD
Desirable Spacing	5 miles or more	2 miles or more	Generally 1/2 mile to 2 miles	Generally 1/4 to 1/2 mile	Varies with block length (at least 125 feet between)
Posted Speed	55 to 70 MPH	40 to 55 MPH	30 to 45 MPH	30 to 35 MPH or less	20 to 30 MPH
Access	Controlled access. Grade-separated interchanges and frontage/service roads.	Intersect with Freeways, Arterials, Collectors and Local Streets. Restricted driveway access.	Intersect with Freeways, Arterials, Collectors and Local Streets. Limited driveway access.	Intersect with Arterials and Local Streets. Driveways permitted.	Intersect with Collectors and Arterials. Driveways permitted.
On-Street Parking	Prohibited	Restricted	Restricted	Normally permitted	Permitted
Community Relationship	Define neighborhood boundaries.	Define neighborhood boundaries.	Define and traverse neighborhood boundaries.	Internal and traverse neighborhood boundaries.	Internal.
Through Truck Routes	Yes	Yes	Permitted	No	No
Bikeways	No	No	Limited	Yes	Yes
Sidewalks	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes



**FIGURE 6-1  
FUTURE  
THOROUGHFARE  
MASTER PLAN**



- Freeway Interstate
- Arterial
- Collector
- - - Arterial to Freeway Upgrade
- - - Collector to Arterial Upgrade
- - - Collector Upgrade
- New Collector
- - - Intersection and Other Improvements
- - - Proposed ODOT Upgrade
- Shawnee City Limits
- Planning Area

# CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



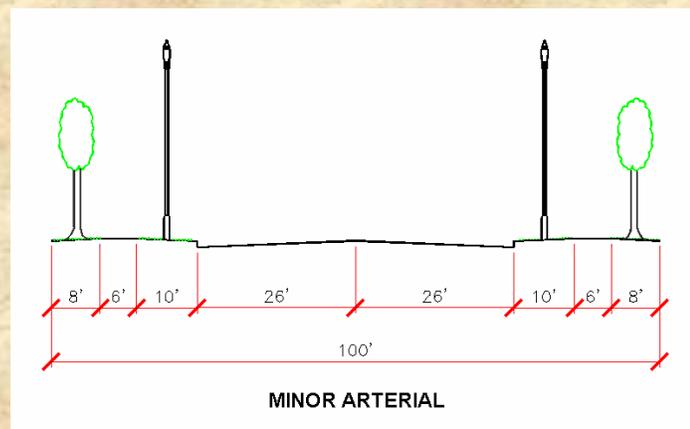
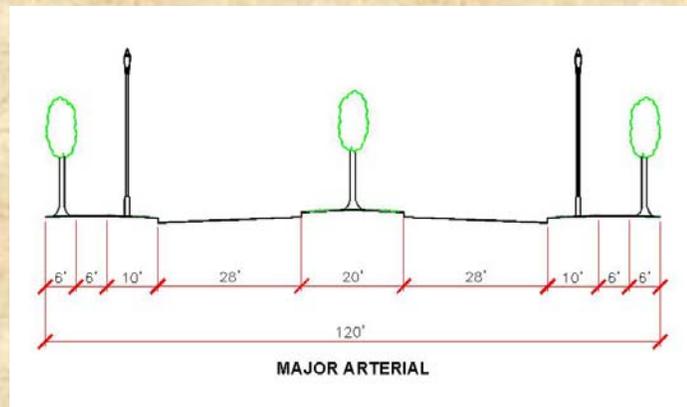
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

according to need, including such characteristics as the desire for on-street parking, presence of bike lanes, choice of trails or sidewalks, anticipated traffic volume, and location within an urban, suburban or rural setting. **Figures 6.3 and 6.4, Major and Minor Arterial Sections; Collector and Local Sections** show the proposed typical roadway and right-of-way sections for the appropriate roadways.

Classifications for alleys and marginal access streets are a function of service and property access and, therefore, are not included in the recommended classification system of the Master Thoroughfare Plan. This is not to indicate that the Master Thoroughfare Plan ignores the possibility of alleys in a development. In fact, the Plan recognizes the valuable contribution of alleys to the urban fabric and establishment of community character and proposes that they be used as appropriate.

**Major Arterial.** A major arterial is proposed to be a divided thoroughfare with a recommended right-of-way width of 120 foot including a pavement section of 56 feet and a 20 foot raised median. The 56 foot pavement section is a proposed increase from the existing 50 feet to include a median, curb and gutter to serve the roadway. Sidewalks are located on both sides of the street and are located 10 feet from the face of the curb. The 10 foot natural area between the

**Figure 6.3**  
**Major & Minor Arterial Sections**



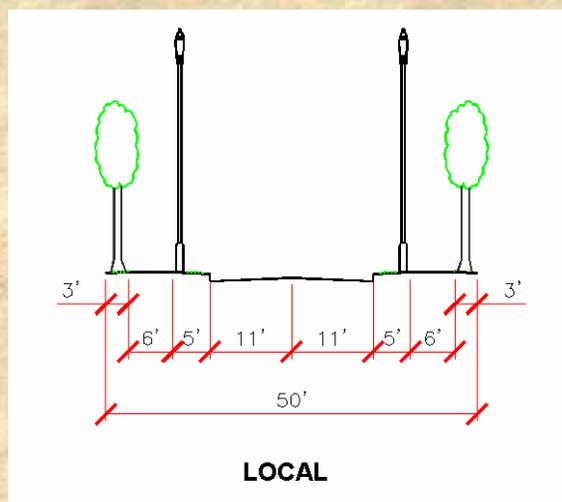
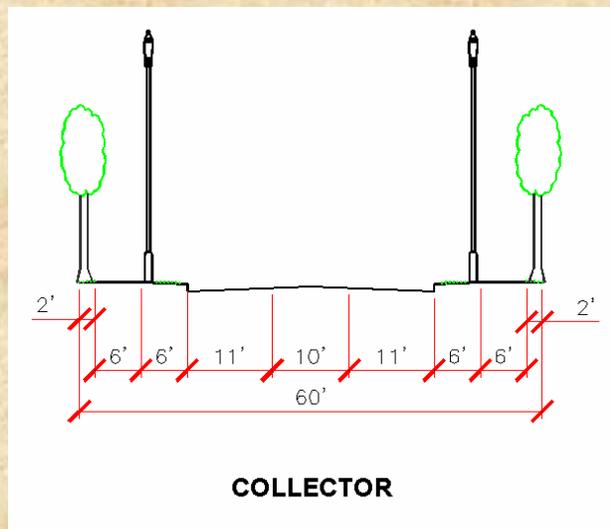
street and sidewalk is sufficient in length to provide for decorative street lighting, landscape, greenspace and public open space. In addition, a median provides for access control and improved traffic safety. Examples of Major Arterials are proposed to include 45<sup>th</sup> Street, Kickapoo, and Harrison Streets.

**Minor Arterial.** An undivided thoroughfare is recommended to include 100 foot of total street right-of-way with a 52 foot pavement section. Modifying the pavement section from 50 feet to 52 feet allows for curb and gutter and two 11 foot lanes. Sidewalks are located on both sides of the street and are located 10 feet from the face of the curb. The 24 foot right-of-way, excluding the width of pavement, provides space for decorative street lighting, landscaping, greenspace and public open space. Bryan, Farrall, Highland, Independence, and MacArthur Streets are examples of proposed Minor Arterials.

**Collector.** The collector roadway classification is recommended to maintain a 60 foot right-of-way width and continue to require 32 feet of roadway width. Sidewalks are located on both sides of the street and are located six feet from face of curb. The 14 foot of additional right-of-way along each side of the roadway provides space for decorative street lighting, landscaping, greenspace and public open space. Examples of Collectors a proposed to include Westech, Broadway, Union, Wallace, and Main Streets.

**Local.** A local street is proposed to include 50 foot right-of-way with

**Figure 6.4**  
**Collector & Local Sections**





22 feet of roadway width. The limited pavement of a 22 foot roadway increases affordability by reducing infrastructure cost and maintenance while increasing the sense of community. If needed, local roadways may be increased to a width of 26 feet, allowing for flexibility in standards. Sidewalks are proposed to be offset from the face of the curb to allow adequate width for lighting and greenspace.

### **CRITERIA FOR ROADWAY CLASSIFICATIONS**

Arterial roadways form an interconnecting network for communitywide movement of traffic through connections to expressways, parkways and interstates. Although they usually represent only five to ten percent of the total roadway network, arterials typically accommodate about 30 to 40 percent of an area's travel volume. Since traffic movement, not land access, is the primary function of arterials, access management is essential to avoid traffic congestion and delays caused by turning movements for vehicles and other traffic to no more than 10-15 miles per hour. Signalized intersection spacing should be long enough to allow a variety of signal cycle lengths and timing plans that can be adjusted to meet changes in traffic volumes and maintain traffic progression (preferably one-third to one-half mile spacing).

The cross section of arterials may vary from multi-lane roadways in developing fringe and rural areas east of Bryan Street where traffic volumes have not increased to the point that more travel lanes are needed or are not warranted due to limited density. Functional classification is not dependent on the number of lanes since the functional role served by a roadway typically remains over time while the roadway's cross section is improved to accommodate increasing traffic volumes. Thus, lower-volume roadways may also function as arterials, particularly in fringe and rural areas.

Subdivision street layout plans and commercial and industrial districts should include Collectors as well as Local Residential Streets in order to provide efficient traffic ingress/egress and circulation. Since collectors generally carry higher traffic volumes than local residential streets, they may require a wider roadway cross-section or added lanes at intersections with arterials to provide adequate capacity for both through traffic and turning movements. However, since speeds are slower and more turn movements are expected, a higher speed differential and much closer intersection/access spacing can be used than on arterials. Collectors typically make up about five to ten percent of the total street system.

Local residential streets allow direct property access within residential and commercial areas. Through traffic and excessive speed should be discouraged by using appropriate geometric designs, traffic control devices, curvilinear alignments, and discontinuous streets. Local streets typically comprise about 65 to 80 percent of the total street system in urban areas.

## THOROUGHFARE DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS

This section outlines typical criteria for certain characteristics of street and land development, which should be part of a CPAC's thoroughfare development standards and subdivision regulations.

- ◆ **Location and Alignment of Thoroughfares.** The general location and alignment of thoroughfares must be in conformance with the Thoroughfare Plan. Subdivision plats should provide for dedication of needed right-of-way for thoroughfares within or bordering the subdivision. Any major changes in thoroughfare alignment that are inconsistent with the Plan require the approval of the Shawnee Planning Commission, The City of Shawnee, and Pottawatomie County through a public hearing process. A major change would include any proposal that involves the addition or deletion of established thoroughfare designations, or changes in the planned general alignment of thoroughfares that would affect parcels of land beyond the specific tract in question.
- ◆ **Location and Alignment of Collectors.** Generally, to adequately serve their role to collect traffic from local residential streets and distribute it to the arterial street system, collectors should be placed between arterial streets, with a spacing of approximately one-half mile.
- ◆ **Right-of-Way and Pavement Width.** The pavement width and right-of-way width for thoroughfares and other public streets should conform to minimum standards unless a waiver is granted using formalized criteria. Properties proposed for subdivision that include or are bordered by an existing thoroughfare with insufficient right-of-way width should be required to dedicate land to compensate for any right-of-way deficiency of that thoroughfare. When a new thoroughfare extension is proposed to connect with an existing thoroughfare that has narrower right-of-way, a transitional area should be provided.
- ◆ **Continuation and Projection of Streets.** Existing streets in adjacent areas should be continued and, when an adjacent area is undeveloped, the street layout should provide for future projection and continuation of streets into the undeveloped area. In particular, the arrangement of streets in a new subdivision must make provision for continuation of right-of-way for the principal existing streets in adjoining areas – or where new streets will be necessary for future public requirements on adjacent properties that have not yet been subdivided. Where adjacent land is undeveloped, stub streets should include a temporary turnaround to accommodate fire apparatus.
- ◆ **Location of Street Intersections.** New intersections of subdivision streets with existing thoroughfares within or bordering the subdivision should be planned to align with existing intersections, where feasible, to avoid creation of off-set or “jogged” intersections





and to provide for continuity of existing streets, especially Collectors and higher classes of thoroughfares.

- ◆ **Angle of Intersections.** The angle of intersections should be as nearly at a right angle as possible. Corner cutbacks or radii should be required at the acute corner of the right-of-way line, to provide adequate sight distance at intersections.
- ◆ **Offset Intersections.** Offset or “jogged” street intersections should have a minimum separation of 125 feet between the centerlines of the intersecting streets.
- ◆ **Cul-de-sacs.** Through streets and tee-intersections are preferable to cul-de-sacs. Care should be taken so as not to over utilize cul-de-sacs, which limits thru access, restricts pedestrian circulation, increases response times and confuse motorists. However, when cul-de-sacs are used, they should have a maximum length of no more than 600 feet measured from the connecting street centerline to centerline of radius point, with a pave turnaround pad of at least 80 feet and a right-of-way diameter at least 100 feet in residential areas, and at least 180 feet diameter on a street with a 200 foot right-of-way diameter in commercial and industrial areas. A cul-de-sac with an island should have a diameter of no less than 150 feet.
- ◆ **Private Streets.** The Shawnee Planning Commission should not approve a plat containing private streets, including gated communities and possibly manufactured housing communities unless adequate precautions are taken to ensure minimum standards of construction, necessary space for utilities and street widening, sufficient room for maneuvering emergency vehicles and appropriate pedestrian circulation and emergency access.
- ◆ **Sidewalks.** Within the boundaries of a subdivision, sidewalks should be installed on both sides of Arterial, Collector, and Local streets, unless the development occurs in a rural area and will construct an internal trail system.

### **ACCESS MANAGEMENT**

Access management is the coordination between land access and traffic flow along streets in and around Shawnee, with a basic premise to preserve and enhance the performance and safety of the street system. Access management techniques could manage congestion along existing corridors such as Kickapoo, MacArthur, and Harrison Streets and protect the capacity of increasingly used streets such as Bryan Street by controlling access from adjacent development. Properly utilized, it can slow or eliminate the need for street widening or right-of-way acquisition. When widening is necessary, the limited number of access points improves the speed of design and development.

Techniques to accomplish access management include limiting and separating vehicle (and pedestrian) conflict points, reducing locations that require vehicle deceleration, removing vehicle turning movements, creating intersection spacing that facilitates signal progression, and providing on-site ingress and egress capacity. In addition, regulation

focuses on the spacing and design of driveways, street connections, medians and median openings, auxiliary lanes, on-street parking and parking facilities, on-site storage aisles, traffic signals, turn lanes, freeway interchanges, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and loading zones.

Research indicates that a well-designed and effectively administered access management plan can result in the following tangible benefits:

- ◆ Collision and crash rates are reduced by 40 to 60 percent
- ◆ Roadway capacity and the useful life of transportation facilities is prolonged
- ◆ Travel time and congestion are decreased
- ◆ Better coordination between access and land uses is accomplished
- ◆ Air quality is improved
- ◆ Economic activity is enhanced
- ◆ Urban design and transportation objectives are reconciled
- ◆ The unique character and livability of the community is preserved through the coordination of land use and transportation.

On the other hand, failure to manage access negatively impacts the efficiency of transportation networks in the following ways:

- ◆ More driveways related to strip commercial development
- ◆ Local streets become bypasses for congested streets thereby creating the need to address cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods
- ◆ More frequent driveway related accidents
- ◆ Vehicle conflicts from closely spaced driveways, which increase congestion thereby reducing capacity
- ◆ Longer travel times that shrink market areas for business
- ◆ More difficulty in providing safe access for new development thereby affecting economic growth
- ◆ Lower cost/benefit ratios of transportation improvements
- ◆ Greater need for wider streets to compensate for lost capacity
- ◆ More cluttered streets and frequent driveways, which create an undesirable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists

The following access management strategies may be used to coordinate the access needs of adjacent land uses with the function of the transportation system:

- ◆ **Intergovernmental Coordination.** Access management in the Shawnee planning area outside of municipal limits will require coordination between The City of Shawnee and Pottawatomie County. However, a more regional strategy involves members of the





Local Tribes as well as ODOT and federal organizations involved in design and construction of roadways. Through coordinated efforts, access management can even further emphasize thoroughfare efficiency.

- ◆ **Separate Conflict Points.** Two common conflict points are driveways and adjacent intersections. Spacing driveways so they are not located within the area of influence of intersections or other driveways is a method to achieve access management objectives.
- ◆ **Restrict Turning Movements at Un-signalized Driveways and Intersections on Multi-Lane Roadways.** Full movement intersections can serve multiple developments through the use of joint driveways or cross-access easements. Turning movements can be restricted by designing accesses to limit movements or by the construction of raised medians that can be used to provide turn lanes.
- ◆ **Establish Design Standards.** Design standards addressing the spacing of access points, driveway dimensions and radii, sight distance, and the length of turn lanes and tapers are effective mechanisms for managing the balance between the movement of traffic and site access.
- ◆ **Locate and Design Traffic Signals to Enhance Traffic Movement.** Interconnecting and spacing traffic signals to enhance the progressive movement of traffic is another strategy for managing mobility needs. Keeping the number of signal phase to a minimum can improve the capacity of a corridor by increasing green bandwidth by 20 seconds.
- ◆ **Remove Turning Vehicles from Through Travel Lanes.** Left and right turn speed change lanes provide for the deceleration of vehicles turning into driveways or other major streets and for the acceleration of vehicles exiting driveways and entering major highways.
- ◆ **Encourage Shared Driveways, Unified Site Plans and Cross Access Easements.** Joint use of driveways reduces the proliferation of driveways and preserves the capacity of major transportation corridors. Such driveway arrangements also encourage sharing of parking and internal circulation among businesses that are close in proximity.

### FUNDING SOURCES

Implementation of the Master Thoroughfare Plan or the goals, objectives and actions of the transportation element is not the responsibility of a single entity or agency. Instead, it will require coordination and the combined resources of local, state, and federal transportation funding programs, as well as participation by the private sector. Following are alternative funding sources that are available or could be considered for financing future improvements to the transportation system.

FEDERAL FUNDING

In the past six years many transportation improvements were eligible to receive federal funds as part of the Transportation Efficiency Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). The six year program, through September 30, 2003, provided federal funding for surface transportation improvements, including roadways, public transportation, pedestrian facilities, and a number of other transportation improvements. TEA-21 emphasized the development of a National Intermodal Transportation System that effectively connects highways with other modes of transportation. Additionally, TEA-21 gave states and local governments a significant amount of flexibility in determining the use of available federal funds. The federal share required for TEA-21 funding is generally 80 percent, with the remaining 20 percent provided by the state or local governments.

Congress will vote on re-authorization of TEA-21, or Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act of 2003, SAFETEA. The new legislation strives to provide improved safety, security, congestion, intermodal connectivity, and timely project delivery. There is a possibility of extending TEA-21 until further SAFETEA action takes place.

**Title I – Surface Transportation** – This title includes a number of programs and provisions oriented toward providing funding primarily for highway related projects. Some of the key programs within this title include the following:

- ◆ **National Highway System (NHS)** - This program provides funding for improvements to rural and urban roadw that are part of the NHS, including Interstate Highways and designated connections to major intermodal terminals. In certain circumstances, NHS funds may also be used to fund transit improvements in NHS corridors.
- ◆ **Surface Transportation Program (STP) - Federal Hazard Elimination Program** - This program addresses safety-related projects on and off the state highway system. Projects are evaluated using three years of accident data, and ranked by a Safety Improvement Index.
- ◆ **Surface Transportation Program (STP) - Federal Railroad Signal Safety Program** - This program provides for installation of automatic railroad warning devices at most hazardous railroad crossings on and off of the state highway system. Projects are selected from a statewide inventory list, which is prioritized by an index (number of trains per day, train speed, ADT, type of existing warning device, train-involved accidents within prior five (5) years, etc.)
- ◆ **Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP)** - This program provides funds to assist the States in their programs to replace and rehabilitate deficient on-state highway bridges.





- ◆ **Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program** - The primary purpose of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) is to fund projects and programs in air quality and maintenance areas for ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), and small particulate matter (PM-10) which reduce transportation related emissions.
- ◆ **Transportation Enhancements (TE)** - Transportation enhancements are transportation related activities that are designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic, and environmental aspects of the Nation's intermodal transportation system. The transportation enhancements program provides for the implementation of a variety of non-traditional projects, with examples ranging from the restoration of historic transportation facilities, to bike and pedestrian facilities, to landscaping and scenic beautification, and to the mitigation of water pollution from highway runoff.
- ◆ **Recreational Trail Program** - This program provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users.
- ◆ **Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways** - The Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways provisions of Section 217 of Title 23, as amended by TEA-21, describe how Federal-aid funds may be used for bicycle and pedestrian projects. These projects are broadly eligible for all of the major funding programs where they compete with other transportation projects for available funding at the State and MPO levels.
- ◆ **Job Access and Reverse Commute Grants** - The Access to Jobs Program provides competitive grants to local governments and non-profit organizations to develop transportation services to connect welfare recipients and low-income persons to employment and support service.

#### *STATE FUNDING*

A large part of state funding originates at the federal level in programs as mentioned above. The State Capital Improvement Program, CIP, for 2003 to 2007 is used to prioritize funding with either whole state funds or matched federal transportation funds and are applied to a variety of transportation improvements and maintenance including roadways, bridges, highways, and streets. One example project currently listed on the program is widening and resurfacing of MacArthur Street from US 177 east as well as the utility relocation to accompany the construction.

#### *LOCAL FUNDING*

Local support through taxes and bonds supply funds for staff, services, utilities, as well as transportation. While a large portion of funds is allocated to transportation, the cost of improvements and maintenance is very high. The city must divide funds and allocate them to maintenance, improvements, and new construction. Utilizing the thoroughfare plan and CIP for priorities and type of projects will yield

the best solution to growth and reinforcement of the transportation infrastructure.

## **THOROUGHFARE MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation of thoroughfare system improvements occurs in stages over time as development continues and, over many years, builds toward the ultimate thoroughfare system shown in the Thoroughfare Plan for the Shawnee Planning Area. The fact that a future thoroughfare is shown on the Plan does not represent a commitment to a specific time frame for construction, nor will that any of the jurisdictions involved in road construction build the roadway improvement. Individual thoroughfare improvements may be constructed by a variety of implementing agencies, including The City of Shawnee, Pottawatomie County and ODOT, as well as Indian Tribes, private developers, intra-governmental agencies, and land owners for sections of roadways located within or adjacent to their property. Road construction can be implemented by individual entities, such as Pottawatomie County, or in partnership with an entity such as Pottawatomie County.

Each of these entities can utilize the Thoroughfare Plan in making decisions relating to planning, coordination and programming of future development and transportation improvements. Review of preliminary and final plats for proposed subdivisions in accordance with local subdivision regulations should include consideration of compliance with the Master Thoroughfare Plan in order to ensure consistency and availability of sufficient right-of-way for the general roadway alignments shown in the Plan.

It is of particular importance to provide for continuous roadways and through connections between developments to ensure community wide mobility. By identifying thoroughfare locations land owners and developers can consider the roadways in their subdivision planning, dedication of public right-of-way, and provision of setbacks for new buildings, utility lines, and other improvements located along the right-of-way for existing or planned thoroughfares.

## **PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS**

It will be necessary for the Shawnee Planning Commission to periodically consider and adopt amendments to the Master Thoroughfare Plan to reflect changing conditions and new needs for thoroughfare system improvements and development. A systematic procedure should be followed for making Plan amendments, including a set schedule for annually inviting and considering proposed changes.

The process for amending the Master Thoroughfare Plan should be established by ordinance. Typically, Plan amendment requests may originate from landowners, civic groups, neighborhood associations, developers, other governmental agencies, City staff, and other interested parties. The Shawnee Planning Commission and applicable





members of City or County staff should analyze proposed revisions. The Shawnee Planning Commission should then formally consider the proposed changes and staff recommendations. The Commission should conduct a public hearing on proposed amendments, including required public notice in advance of the hearing. Proposed amendments should be considered in a fair, reasonable, and open process. The burden for proving compelling reasons for the public benefit of any proposed changes should rest with the requesting parties. Decisions and determinations should represent the best interests of the public.

The revised Master Thoroughfare Plan, including any approved Plan amendments, should be adopted by the Shawnee Planning Commission and submitted to the Shawnee City Commission and Pottawatomie County Commission for its consideration. The amended Plan becomes effective upon final adoption.





# CHAPTER SEVEN

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## IMAGE & DESIGN

### INTRODUCTION

Identity is a critical component of any community. Successful places are those that are remembered for that “special something.” Special character can be based upon any of a number of physical cultural or historical traits. In the community of Shawnee, the trait that is most predominant is “small town America.” However, as many have stated, the message of a small town that is a desirable place to live, work and play is often cloudy and can be difficult to interpret.

Many have often coined the phrase that “image is everything” when it comes to marketing or selling a product. Today, designers and economic development specialists have come to realize that the same can be said regarding communities. The physical presentation of a community is considered a reflection of residents and business owners. The impression left by a community with random clutter, chaotic signage, oceans of asphalt, and unkempt structures is likely to be substantially different than one which greets visitors and residents with a unique entry, limited and low scale signs, maintained and organized structures, and ample landscaping.

The Image & Design Element of the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan focuses upon opportunities for presenting the community in a way that sends the desired series of messages to residents, business owners and potential customers. Image and design recommendations improve quality of life and marketability. Solutions recognize that physical characteristics can establish messages particular to the community, neighborhood, district, or site.

Issues that touch upon image often receive two criticisms. First, “image” is considered to be a “soft issue” that does not carry the same importance as “hard services” such as water or streets. This was perhaps more pervasive when common belief was that image requirements stood in the way of economic development. Today, it is understood that image *is* economic development. Second, image is often argued to be in the eyes of the beholder. This is certainly true, but communities also often have a series of common, general values. For example, it is doubtful that many would find a downtown Shawnee revitalization project characterized by the pastel colors and art deco architecture of South Beach Florida to be any more appropriate to the area than a single story, corrugated metal warehouse.

## KEY IMAGE & DESIGN ISSUES

The Image & Design Element builds upon the issues raised throughout the Comprehensive Plan such as protection and maintenance of neighborhoods or discussion of signage. In many cases, image forms a physical bridge between important elements. For example, discussion of streetscape improvements or development patterns involves land use and transportation. Issues guiding development of the Image & Design Element have a foundation in physical analysis of the community, coupled with substantial citizen participation and comment.

**Establish an Image.** The City of Shawnee offers a number of historical, cultural and physical traits from which to draw a strong identity. On a communitywide basis, the strongest existing identity is of Shawnee as a “small town alternative” that offers a unique mix of “big city amenities.” The presence of the two universities and the Gordon Cooper Technology Center indicates a unique and identifiable strength in education. Unfortunately, these and other marketable traits are sometimes difficult to recognize and nearly impossible to identify when approaching Shawnee from a visitor’s primary point of access – Interstate 40.

**Enhance Appearance of the Community.** During discussion with area stakeholders and the general public numerous individuals cited concern with the overall appearance of the community. One individual noted difficulty in getting to downtown on an attractive street. Others noted that entries provided poor appearance and that signs, landscaping and parking were unappealing. Much like personal appearance, the attractiveness of a community is often considered a reflection of community pride and confidence. Fortunately, beautification projects are often relatively easy to accomplish compared to major, more expensive projects.





**Increase Maintenance and Reinvestment.** Maintenance is a significant step toward community beautification and a significant indicator of community pride. Several involved in citizen participation indicated the need for improved maintenance of existing structures and amenities. In residential areas, the City of Shawnee has aggressively pursued demolition of derelict structures, yet some feel that more is needed. Similarly, infill development was noted as a means of utilizing vacant, unused land. Maintenance, revitalization and other issue such as code enforcement, are equally applicable to commercial and industrial activity.

## IMAGE & DESIGN GOALS

Image & Design goals are symbolic of the community's desire to present Shawnee as a city with much to offer residents and pride and guests. They are also recognition that image plays an instrumental role in the impression that is placed on all that travel through the area. Subsequent objectives and actions statements are designed to enhance the image of Shawnee through projects and community involvement.

The following goals indicate Shawnee as a community that offers:

- ◆ Identity as a community with a small town atmosphere and diverse, dynamic character;
- ◆ An appealing and easy-to-interpret attractiveness to residents and guests; and,
- ◆ Well maintained surroundings that are the direct result of pride in ownership and active community involvement.

## IMAGE & DESIGN OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS

### ESTABLISH IDENTITY

**Goal One:** Identity as a community with a small town atmosphere and diverse, dynamic character.

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Improve sense of "arrival" and "place" in Shawnee by forming a recognizable edge between rural and urban development.
- ◆ Preserve open space, sensitive lands and areas of value to the community.
- ◆ Promote communitywide image as well as the identity of Shawnee's unique character districts.
- ◆ Ensure compatible scale and nature of development within Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Consider quantifying the extent of urban development to be supported and identify a boundary by which municipal

services will be provided thereby allowing urban and suburban development.

- ✓ Prepare and adopt a long-range annexation plan to incorporate the future development areas allowing imposition of the City's regulatory authority.
- ✓ Coordinate with the County to adopt standards for agricultural areas, including permitted uses, minimum acreage, height and area requirements.
- ✓ Identify areas with rural/countryside character and establish standards such as minimum lot size, open space protection and mandated clustering to sustain them.
- ✓ Consider conservation easements as a tool to sustain rural agricultural character.
- ✓ Establish a schedule of increasing density bonuses and other forms of development incentives to equitably compensate for protection of open space.
- ✓ Adopt performance standards for infill development and parcels abutting existing development allowing increased density and intensity in exchange for meeting select community image and design objectives.
- ✓ Convert current building coverage provisions to an impervious surface ratio (ISR), which more accurately reflects use intensity.
- ✓ Establish yard requirements for abutting nonresidential and residential uses based upon use density and intensity rather than a set, constant dimension.
- ✓ Incorporate intensity measures into the zoning ordinance that add flexibility to uniform regulations applied between residential and nonresidential districts.
- ✓ Incorporate, as of right provisions within the zoning ordinance, with applicable performance standards and measures, allowing cluster (25 percent minimum open space), conservation (50 percent minimum open space) and preservation (80 percent minimum open space) development without requiring a zoning amendment and a public hearing process.
- ✓ Initiate rezoning of the undeveloped or underdeveloped land within the Neighborhood Commercial Nodes to a C-1, Neighborhood Commercial zoning designation.
- ✓ Amend the C-1 zoning district provisions to reduce the required front yard setback to a 10-foot "build-to" line. Subsequently establish standards for the front yard including increased landscaping, use of the public open space, and building orientation. Subsequently, adopt blank wall regulations to control the appearance of building walls adjacent to the street.
- ✓ Adopt design standards specific to the Neighborhood Commercial Nodes requiring pitched roofs and the use of





# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- building materials that are compatible and cohesive with neighboring residential uses.
- ✓ Limit the maximum square footage of any building within a Neighborhood Commercial Node to no more than 20,000 square feet with a total cumulative building area within the district of 60,000 square feet.
- ✓ Restrict the maximum amount of development on a single site to not more than 40 percent (24,000 square feet) of the allowable cumulative building area.
- ✓ Establish a minimum open space ratio for each site, with incentives for creation of pedestrian plazas, public gathering areas, or other urban design features (fountains, public art, etc.)
- ✓ In addition to the maximum building coverage percentage in the current zoning regulations, adopt a maximum impervious surface ratio (ISR), maximum floor area ratio (FAR), and minimum landscape surface ratio (LSR) to sustain the suburban character of the Technology Campus, Expanded Education Campus and Industrial District.
- ✓ Transition the development character within the Harrison Commercial Corridor from auto-urban to suburban with provisions for minimum open space ratios, maximum impervious surface ratios, floor area and building coverage ratios, internal and peripheral site landscaping, tree preservation, and buffering requirements.
- ✓ Establish alternate intensity factors (ISR, FAR, LSR) within the interior of the Industrial Park (out of view from Kickapoo, Harrison, Wolverine and Garrett's Lake arterial roadways) to allow less intensive industrial uses with reduced standards.
- ✓ Establish standards within the PUD regulations to guide development of mixed use traditional neighborhoods, particularly allowing for a variety of housing types and lot sizes. Such standards would address net versus gross density, a minimum open space ratio, and maximum impervious surface ratio.
- ✓ Create a suburban (rather than auto-urban) character of newer neighborhoods by preserving natural areas and vegetation, planning for sufficient right-of-way width to maintain green space adjacent to roadways, integrating permanent open space, eventually establishing tree canopied streets, and considering density and building coverage limitations.
- ✓ Within the C-4, Central Business District, zoning district, adopt provisions establishing a minimum building height (minimum two stories or 28 feet), minimum floor area ratio (0.50), and required zero front and side setbacks to

maximize building enclosure and its pedestrian orientation.

- ✓ Develop regulations to accommodate higher density residential uses, commercial office and service uses, and government institutional uses adjacent to the Downtown core (along Main Street and extending one-half to one full block to the north and south) where the character remains urban, but may require relaxed height, floor area and setback standards.
- ✓ In addition to the maximum building coverage provisions in the current zoning ordinance, establish ratios for open space, floor area and landscape surface within the Uptown District and Harrison Commercial Corridor districts to sufficiently lessen the intensity of uses and enhance development character.

## ENHANCE APPEARANCE

**Goal Two:** An appealing and easy-to-interpret attractiveness to residents and guests.

### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Enhance the image of Shawnee for residents and local business owners.
- ◆ Ensure that tourists and other guests to Shawnee discover a visually appealing community.
- ◆ Improve wayfinding opportunities for guests to Shawnee.

### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Strategically establish gateway points into the City of Shawnee, particularly upon entrance into the community along I-40 in coordination with parameters established by ODOT.
- ✓ Acquire a unique, themed wayfinding system to utilize throughout Shawnee as a source of information and direction.
- ✓ Allow public displays (not storage) and use of sidewalks (subject to ADA compliance) and other spaces to encourage street-level pedestrian activity.
- ✓ Require parking to be in the side and rear yards with bufferyard requirements for abutting uses.
- ✓ Amend the landscaping (Sec. 901.16) and sightproof screening (Sec. 901.17) provisions of the zoning ordinance to incorporate performance-based bufferyard standards, which offer multiple options for buffering based on the density (units per acre or ratio of floor area) and intensity (amount of open space, impervious surface) of the abutting uses.
- ✓ Establish site design standards for the areas within an auto-urban character (primarily along the major transportation corridors such as Kickapoo and Harrison)





to locate parking to the side and rear of the building, reduce the front yard setback, increase open space and landscape surface area, and better accommodate the pedestrian.

- ✓ Consider anti-monotony regulations for newer development to limit the character impacts caused by patterned (model) home styles. This may require alternative elevations of models and use of varying rooflines, building materials and architectural detailing.
- ✓ Review general parking requirements to ensure that the number of required spaces remains appropriate.
- ✓ Consider altering the number of required spaces in particular districts such as the downtown area to account for the lack of space available for parking without removing additional structures.
- ✓ Promote joint use of parking facilities/spaces to include uses that do not share the same site to permit and promote offsite, nearby parking in appropriate areas such as the downtown district or in situations such as space shared by religious institutions and office space with different hours of operation.
- ✓ Alter requirements of the sign ordinance to eliminate development of billboards to the extent possible and reduce the use/development of pole signs through shared signage.
- ✓ Encourage development of sign design standards for various character districts that appropriately reflect the desired image for the area.
- ✓ Consider coordination of taxing entities or codevelopment of a low-interest revolving loan funds for the purpose of making alterations to existing sites such as landscaping changes, structural improvements and changes to signage.
- ✓ Coordinate street furniture, street lights, street trees and other items of the streetscape to ensure an efficient and appealing image, including deviations as needed to enhance individual character districts.
- ✓ Ensure that incorporation of design and aesthetic improvements to streetscape are added into capital improvement projects as they occur.
- ✓ Develop a strategic plan for implementation of visual features in the streetscape to allow for implementation over time, beginning with sites that will have significant visual impact.

## INCREASE MAINTENANCE & REINVESTMENT

**Goal Three:** Well maintained surroundings that are the direct result of pride in ownership and active community involvement.

### POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Enhance revitalization efforts in commercial areas, as well as established neighborhoods, including underutilized and vacant sites.
- ◆ Ensure that existing structures and sites are well maintained and of a quality expected to meet the desired image of Shawnee.

### POSSIBLE ACTIONS

- ✓ Ensure increased coordination among all potential and relevant entities with an interest in a well maintained Shawnee, including the City of Shawnee, the chamber of commerce, the Shawnee Economic Development Foundation, and other groups.
- ✓ Conduct research on best practices in maintenance for appropriate application in Shawnee.
- ✓ Develop a one-stop revitalization/redevelopment shop similar to that currently utilized for development of new sites, including development of a resource/publication detailing the various programs available.
- ✓ Utilize community organizations to implement low-cost, low-skill maintenance solutions such as minor repairs, site improvements and painting.
- ✓ Examine code enforcement policies and practices for potential improvements if appropriate.
- ✓ Establish a means of informing the general public regarding code enforcement activities and accomplishments, better report response to requests for assistance, and gather feedback.

## ESTABLISHING IMAGE

For the Shawnee resident, perception of identity and image are shaped through daily interaction with the community. For visitors, the first impression is often the only impression. In either case, however, image is of extreme importance. To the resident, image is a display of civic and personal pride. Just as a well maintained home shows pride in ownership, a well maintained, aesthetically pleasing community presents community ownership. More, physical image is an opportunity to convey a message regarding the character and values of the community.

The visitor or the passerby, on the other hand, will remember Shawnee as a snapshot – a compilation of messages received over a short period of time. Those messages may dictate the amount of time and money that a guest spends in the community,





aid a family in deciding to send a graduate to OBU, or be an important factor in business relocation.

As a marketing tool, crafting a physical image that positively represents the community is a benefit to both residents and guests. Establishing an appropriate image is often a matter of understanding the marketable strengths of a community; local history, heritage and trends; and the level of support for image-building among area residents, business owners, developers and elected officials.

### **GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING IMAGE**

In older areas of the community, Shawnee continues to represent the nostalgic American image of a small town in the United States. Numerous other communities seek to build upon a similar theme; however, unlike its competition, Shawnee also offers several amenities not often found in a small town. Two universities, a technology center, an airport, and a multi-use facility are not elements commonly associated with images of “Mayberry, USA” – the image that many Americans continue to most associate with the concept of small town life – but certainly add to the quality of life available to area residents. Together, these and other characteristics make Shawnee a unique and marketable product.

Creating or building upon a sense of image is a delicate balance. To many, it is a frivolous activity that adds cost to development. As an economic development tool, it offers no direct relationship to new jobs or taxes. Following some simple, common sense guidelines can result in avoiding some of the pitfalls witnessed in other communities.

- ◆ **Build Upon Existing and Potential Strengths.** Image should be “comfortable” to the City of Shawnee and this is best achieved by building upon existing strengths. Admittedly this can be difficult in some communities that offer little in history, culture or specific amenities. However, Shawnee has tremendous opportunities to build upon existing strengths such as education and small town appeal.
- ◆ **Utilize the “Gestalt Approach” to Image.** In the design world, “gestalt” is a term that indicates that “the whole” is greater than “the sum of the parts.” The Land Use chapter proposes development of “character districts” that strengthen the role that various areas play in the vitality and image of Shawnee. Each of the districts – “the parts” – offer a unique function and, to some extent, identity. However, each area works together to form “the whole” that residents and guests perceive to be the image of Shawnee.

- ◆ **Design for Both Residents and Guests.** Many of the communities that initially embraced image as an economic development tool coordinated design activities with tourism efforts. Today, image is equally recognized as a tool for building community morale. Likewise, a community that is wholly attractive will be more marketable to another important group – those individuals or employers considering relocation to Shawnee.
- ◆ **Educate the Public.** Image improvements can become a lightning rod for individuals concerned with expenditure of taxpayer dollars. Extensive effort should be made to present the physical and economical benefits of enhancing image to the general public.
- ◆ **Find Balance through Gradual Implementation.** Community leaders in Shawnee have a good understanding of the threshold of design regulations and image-related projects that the general public will initially tolerate. Once those efforts are in place and education measures have an impact, the general public will likely accept or even request additional design requirements.
- ◆ **Avoid Design “Fads”.** Structural design, like many other characteristics of modern society, is increasingly focused on fashion. Communities interested in capturing the “latest look” in design guidelines run the risk of being momentarily popular and shortly outdated. Efforts to construct image should be focused upon good design and continued flexibility and creativity.
- ◆ **Go beyond physical “fixes”.** This chapter focuses on the physical features that establish or embellish image. However, while a sense of place can be created by physical elements, it must be socially reinforced to be effective. As an example, to make residents aware of the community’s history and gain support for physical improvements, the City of New Castle, Indiana designed a series of paper “place mats” used on trays at local fast food restaurants that offered entertaining tidbits about the community’s past.

### IMAGE & DESIGN WORKSHOP RESULTS

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, an Image and Character public workshop was conducted at Shawnee Middle School with the intent of determining the identity elements considered most appropriate by area residents. During the workshop, attendees were provided a scoresheet and asked to rate slightly less than 100 images of different physical settings. Results were then utilized to define the visual features most appealing and unappealing to community residents.



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## APPEALING TRAITS

- ◆ **Traditional Design.** In instances of commercial and residential development, visual preference tended toward traditional design. Well maintained downtown structures with traditional treatments such as awnings, large windows and outdoor activity were considered favorable compared to new design, including those that offered additional attention to detail. Residentially, older homes and neotraditional designs such as those found in Celebration, Florida were considered more desirable than modern tract homes.



Traditional Design is popular among Shawnee residents.

- ◆ **Open Space/Campus Setting.** Two of the most popular images selected by workshop attendees were of commercial or public facilities surrounded by appealing open spaces. Manicured, well tended open spaces tended to fare better than images depicting front-facing parking or images of rural, natural areas. Examples of similar settings are present at the two universities as well as the Exxon Mobil chemical plant on Wolverine.



This school campus image was rated highest by workshop attendees.

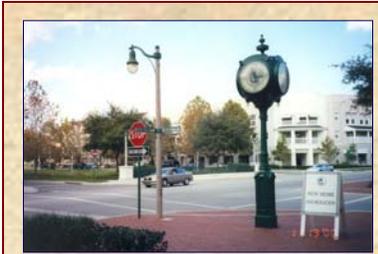
- ◆ **Vegetation/Landscaping.** A significant number of favorable images included some form of vegetation or landscaping. Street trees were particularly popular in urban images, as were medians and planters with vegetation. “Accent” vegetation – landscaping utilized to emphasize a particular area such as an entry or crosswalk was similarly popular. In

comparison, many areas lacking vegetation, particularly large parking lots such as those often associated with strip malls and large retail stores, were considered less favorable.

- ◆ **Organization.** Respondents placed particular emphasis on images that displayed a sense of order and planning. As mentioned, manicured open spaces appeared to be better appreciated than unmanaged natural spaces. Seamless wayfinding images were strongly received when designed to be appealing.
- ◆ **Amenities.** Detail, particularly in the streetscape and in instances that are most appreciated by pedestrian traffic, were

highly favored – in most circumstances. Plazas, fountains, intersection designs, street lights, outdoor cafe’s, era-appropriate signage, awnings, benches, and a town clock were well-received. On the other hand, monuments and bike racks were less appealing.

- ◆ **Small Town.** In nearly every available instance, images depicting small town America were among those most favored.



Amenities such as this street clock add charm to an area.

Downtown images and established neighborhoods, as previously mentioned, were popular. Surprisingly, however, nostalgic amenities such as historic figures and commercial murals on the side of historic structures were not among those most popular.

*UNAPPEALING TRAITS*

- ◆ **Visual Clutter.** Unsurprisingly, the majority of workshop attendees reacted negatively to images that appeared unplanned and chaotic. Typical strip commercial sprawl with unscreened parking, large-scale pole signs and numerous curb cuts rated among the lowest of scores. Interestingly, two instances depicting the rear of commercial structures – one poorly maintained and another well organized – scored equally low.

- ◆ **Featureless or Incompatible Design.** Instances of mediocre design or renovation that did not match surrounding features were poorly rated. Similarly, structures or sites with few amenities or design features were considered unappealing. Two historic structures renovated with little aesthetic concern were noted as unappealing, as were sites such as a government building that had attempted on minimal aesthetic character.



Visual clutter and incompatible design were among those elements least favored by workshop attendees.

- ◆ **Traffic and Parking.** Images involving traffic or parking – with the exception of downtown parking – were largely considered to be unappealing. All instances of strip lot or “big box” retail parking areas were poorly scored.

Those parking areas that incorporated vegetation or screening were among neither low nor high scores. Images depicting heavy traffic received particularly low scores.





- ◆ **Modern/Traditional Mix.** In most cases, new development was considered among neither the most appealing nor unappealing images. On the other hand, modern design incorporated into traditional areas such as downtown housing fared poorly. For example, new townhomes, including several incorporating new amenities and materials, were not rated highly or poorly. Similar townhomes encroaching upon older, single story units were considered unappealing.

### ELEMENTS OF VISUAL IMAGE

Many designers call the viewing area the “outdoor room”. Simply described, human nature prefers a “sense of enclosure” that is comfortable. Similar to a physical room, structures or other features create the “walls” of the enclosure. The concept of the outdoor room is important to building a sense of image because it allows designers to better understand why specific spaces give viewers comfort compared to others.

Within the outdoor room, identity is gathered through a collection of visual “cues.” Together, these elements provide the viewer with a mental image that is either confirmed or altered as additional visual features are captured. Imagine the following visual picture created walking along a sidewalk: the walk is smooth on a well maintained walkway with occasional color or texture at store entries, awnings against brick facades, windows allow visual access to the wares in the different stores, a series of healthy trees provide shade against the sun and a calming rustling from the wind. Together, the elements cue images of pride, attractiveness, safety, and calm, among others. What if the trees were replaced by numerous signs? What if the sidewalk was cracked and poorly maintained or the buildings were solid walls with only a single entry for access? The mental image suddenly changes dramatically and much of the positive perception of the area is lost or neutralized.

All items in the physical environment play a role in creating an area’s identity. The majority of features fall into four categories as elements of *structure, streetscape, parking & site spaces, and monuments & signage*. Each category is comprised of several key items. For example, the mere presence of sidewalks can change perception. In urban or suburban settings, lack of sidewalks is often perceived as an absence of services. On the other hand, in a rural environment, lack of sidewalks is considered a component of rural living. More, the characteristics of a sidewalk can play a prominent role, such as width, condition, materials, location (in proximity to the street), and design. Some new developments now incorporate a curvilinear sidewalk system surrounding by ample trees to mimic the impression of a trail system.

## STRUCTURES

- ◆ **Materials.** Materials add texture and richness to surroundings and can give impressions of tradition, integrity, permanence, and investment. Materials such as brick and stone are more likely to establish a sense of permanence and quality. Metal and vinyl materials, on the other hand, are often considered less appealing. Increasingly, materials are mixed to add unique character to structures.
- ◆ **Height & Mass.** Structures have an impact on an area by their mere presence. Height, particularly in relationship to the width of the streetscape or height of a pedestrian can impose a sense of comfort or discomfort. Mass may have a similar impact. For example, the mass of a large scale industrial complex may seem more imposing than a typical two-story home.
- ◆ **Relationship to Site.** Location of a structure on a site can impact image in a variety of ways. Structures located close to the street can create a sense of comfort given the appropriate scale. Homes on subdivision lots are often located in the center of the lot to permit light and air between structures. Location on a site is often dictated ordinance requirements such as setbacks and perceived consumer requirements such as visible parking.
- ◆ **Structural Amenities.** A common criticism of architecture popular during the period between the 1960s and the 1980s was a lack of ornamentation or amenities. Decoration or variety is particularly important to provide visual messages to the audience. Historic structures are often noted for considerable ornamentation designed to be consumed by pedestrians and other slow moving traffic. Additionally, accessories such as awnings add character and protect pedestrians.



Limited scale and mass make older residential areas seem "comfortable".

## STREETSCAPE

The streetscape is generally comprised of the space within the street right-of-way including the street, sidewalk, and any areas between. The features of the streetscape are commonly based upon anticipated use of the streetscape. For example, a downtown streetscape often includes significantly enhanced sidewalks and pedestrian traffic in addition to substantial vehicle traffic. As a result, the streetscape must reflect both the pedestrian and vehicular scale.

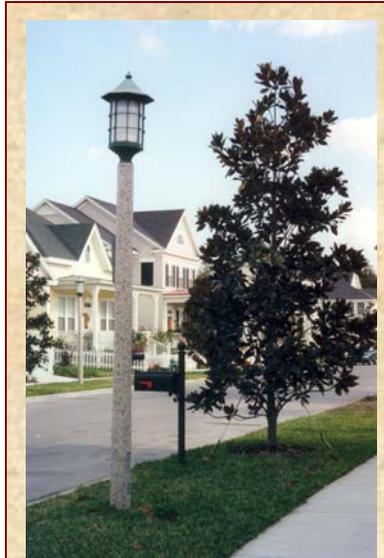
- ◆ **Street/Sidewalk.** The paths available for walking, biking and driving are certainly the most predominant features of the streetscape. Traits such as width, condition,



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

crosswalks/intersections, materials, and pattern can impact perceived image. As an example, brick sidewalks are considered historic and more visually appealing than typical concrete.

- ◆ **Lighting/Standard.** Street lights play a significant role in the impression left by the streetscape, even if they are simply



Street light at a pedestrian scale that matches the character of the area.

present. Street lights indicate safety. Scale is important because it quickly indicates the audience for which the streetscape is designed – pedestrians require a reduced scale while vehicular traffic needs taller standards. Also, design of the light and standard can help to promote historic character, modern sleekness or other desired images.

- ◆ **Street Furniture.** Pedestrian activity is likely to be increased in a streetscape that includes accessories such as benches, kiosks, drinking fountains, and bike racks. More, street

furniture can reinforce a particular image when designed and placed appropriately.

- ◆ **Street Trees & Landscaping.** Vegetation can be used in a variety of ways within the streetscape, but primarily serves to incorporate nature into the built environment. Street trees offer added benefits of separating pedestrian and vehicular activity, providing shade, and decreasing the perceived width of a corridor. When designed appropriately, vegetation can be used to establish a sense of place.
- ◆ **Accessories & Amenities.** Various additional amenities and accessories that are found in the streetscape can add to the character of the area. Use of curb and gutter, for example, rather than ditches can alter the image of a residential area from rural to suburban character. Telephone poles create an immediate and often undesirable impact on image. On the other hand, items such as bollards can be used to designate special areas.

## *PARKING & SITE SPACES*

The spaces between structures and outside of the streetscape also play a major role in establishing the image and character of an area. In rural areas, such spaces can be the dominant theme. Similarly, if not designed appropriately, large scale parking lots can also dictate image – but with starkly different results.

- ◆ **Green/Natural Open Spaces.** Natural spaces within the urbanized area tend to create a sense of relaxation and enjoyment. Guests and residents traditionally associate ample green space with quality of life, particularly when such spaces are well managed. In rural areas, they help to define the sense of small town living by reinforcing the contrast between rural and urban environments.
- ◆ **Materials.** Generally, parking areas and plazas consist of concrete. However, other materials such as brick can be used to enhance the character of open spaces. An alternative is to add character to concrete to imitate brick or stone patterns, add materials to mixture to create texture and color, or design artwork within the open spaces.
- ◆ **Location.** Parking areas have traditionally been located at the front of the structure, adjacent to the roadway because common perception was that the concept of available space and accessibility superceded appearance. However, placement of the majority of parking along the side or to the rear of the structure allows the facility to move closer to potential pedestrian traffic and creates a more comfortable “outdoor room”.
- ◆ **Vegetation & Screening.** Beyond natural areas, vegetation can be used in parking and open spaces for relief from the built environment. Parking areas and other less appealing, but necessary, accessories such as loading/unloading areas, storage, or trash receptacles can be hidden or “screened” through use of trees, shrubs, other vegetation, berms, or fencing. Within parking areas, added trees and vegetation can further break up the monotony of large areas of asphalt.
- ◆ **Active Spaces & Facilities.** Additional open spaces or features add to the quality of life and visual appeal of the “outdoor room”. Water features, monuments, public art, outdoor cafe’s, and well designed plazas add to the character of an area and help to reinforce the desired visual message to the viewer.



Vegetation helps to “soften” the image of large parking areas.

*MONUMENTS & SIGNAGE*

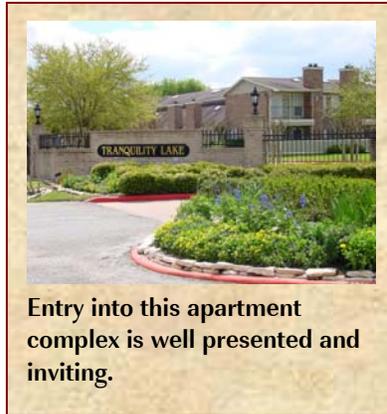
Monuments and signage convey information. Monuments, in this case, describe those features that “announce” presence in a particular area, such as gateway features. The message conveyed by signage may be public or private. Often the need to present information conflicts with the need to maintain an appealing environment. Signage becomes cluttered, unorganized and desired information become lost. On the other hand, signage that



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

is appropriately designed and presented can successfully present information without obstructing or disrupting the image of an area.

- ◆ **Gateway & Entry Treatment.** Shawnee has extensively discussed the need for entry improvements, particularly along I-40. Designed appropriately, an entry can aid in providing or reinforcing an impression of the community. On a reduced level, entry and a “sense of arrival” are also important to unique areas such as neighborhoods or downtown.
- ◆ **Information/Wayfinding.** Public signage is important for providing direction to important destinations throughout



Entry into this apartment complex is well presented and inviting.

Shawnee. It is also important because it provides the public sector with an opportunity reinforce an image through a coordinated, appealing “wayfinding” system that can serve as an example of quality for private interests. Considerations include sign design, color scheme and design of sign standards.

- ◆ **Advertising/Commercial Signs.** Commercial signs take many forms. Billboards are often located along major roadways. Monument signs or pole signs are commonly erected on a site to advertise a business such as Cracker Barrel. Ground signs perform a similar function for nearby traffic. Wall or mounted signs likewise announce an establishment by placement directly on the structure. Numerous other variations of signs are also available, including temporary signs to announce added information such as sales or specials. Image can be impacted by the number, size, location, quality, lighting and materials used for signage.
- ◆ **Reminder “Monuments”.** Some communities utilize reminder monuments to reinforce or enhance a recurring message or theme. Downtowns often do this through use of a single type or pattern for street trees or use of banners. Virtually any design element can serve as a reminder monument if coordinated throughout the area.

**THE ROLE OF CHARACTER AND FORM**

Establishing image is only partially a matter of adding specific design elements into development or the streetscape. Character and form of individual developments equally contribute to the collective appearance of the community. Site design considerations include:

- ◆ placement of parking on a site in relation to the street right-of-way;
- ◆ setbacks of buildings and site improvements;
- ◆ bulk and scale of buildings in relation to the site and adjacent properties;
- ◆ density of residential uses;
- ◆ intensity of nonresidential uses (measured in floor area);
- ◆ amount of public open space retained within residential development;
- ◆ amount of landscape surface within nonresidential development (including all pervious surfaces); and,
- ◆ preservation and protection of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas.

#### COMMUNITY FORM

There are two basic forms of communities:

- ◆ a *freestanding community* like Shawnee is isolated from its neighbors and has a surrounding agricultural character. A freestanding community has an observed edge – although not always clear - enabling visitors to form an identity of the community.
- ◆ a *composite community*, is a series of communities that have grown together thereby making it difficult to identify one community from another. Without clear edges, each community loses its individual identity.

Creating a permanent identifiable edge to the community through clearly defined gateway improvements, preservation of permanent open space, and protection of the rural character will collectively form an “edge” to the community thereby giving it form and definition. As sporadic development continues to stretch outside of the city limits to the north and east - and in each of the other directions - the entrance and sense of arrival into the community will become more blurred. Controlling both the pattern and type of development in these areas will help form a positive first impression and signify a formal entrance into the community.

#### DEFINING CHARACTER

There is an essential difference in evaluating the current development pattern from the perspective of land use as opposed to community character. Simply classifying sites according to functional use, such as low density residential or industrial does not account for other important characteristics such as density, setbacks, height, placement of the building and parking, building scale, bulk, open space, impervious cover, and landscaping.

In addition to use, each of the items that comprise character influence and impact the surrounding area, including image and local quality of life. To protect and enhance Shawnee’s character,





# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

the Comprehensive Plan examines the land use components and development design elements that contribute to sustaining the community's "small-town" character. Once established, revisions to development ordinances can be amended to ensure new development occurs in a manner that is consistent with the vision of the plan - and more importantly, the desired community character.

### *TYPES OF CHARACTER*

Each of the community character types described below are present in Shawnee with varying degrees of significance. The more readily identifiable are the urban character along Main Street in Downtown; the auto-urban nature of commercial development along Kickapoo and Harrison Streets and to a lesser extent along Macarthur Street and Independence Avenue; the auto-urban nature of the older residential neighborhoods proximate to Downtown that have smaller lot sizes and, thus, higher densities; the suburban and estate characters of the newer single family neighborhoods; the suburban character of the university and college campuses noted for large open spaces; and the suburban character of the expansive industrial park with large properties and lots of open space. The outlying areas around the community are largely rural countryside and agricultural in character.

The range of community character types and their functions are as follows:

**Urban Character.** Urban areas are historically the center of commerce, culture and entertainment in the community. The features that contribute to an urban character similar to



**Urban Commercial**



**Urban Residential**



**Auto-Urban Commercial**



**Auto-Urban Residential**



**Suburban Commercial**

that found in Downtown Shawnee are the proximity of uses to the public ways, with little or no building setbacks, and a strong pedestrian orientation at the sidewalk level. An urban center is designed with an intensity of use to draw people into close contact, where congestion and personal encounters are both expected and essential for a vibrant community center.

Urban spaces are “architectural” meaning that they are enclosed by buildings. In other words, the distance across a space, e.g. the width of a downtown street, in relation to height of the block face is essential for creating an “urban” environment. This environment is formed in Downtown as a result of the two-story buildings abutting a relatively wide pedestrian pathway (sidewalk) and a narrowed roadway, which is further enhanced by diagonal parking on either side. If a distance-to-height (D/H) ratio exceeds four, there is limited enclosure and thus, an environment more characteristic of an auto-urban character.

The Downtown represents an urban character as a result of its high floor-to-site area ratios with zero setbacks along the street front, uses that are common of today’s downtown environments, and a mixed pedestrian and vehicular orientation. The urban character could be further enhanced by an increase in population and employment density along Main Street and throughout the Downtown District and further enhancing the pedestrian orientation by extending the streetscape improvements throughout Downtown and creating public plazas and gathering areas.

**Auto-Urban Character.** This character type is most commonly associated with an automobile-oriented commercial or business strip. Fast food restaurants, gas stations and strip shopping centers like those found along Kickapoo and Harrison Streets are the dominant commercial images of an auto-urban character. Higher density residential uses such as attached and multiple family housing, manufactured home communities, and site-built homes on small lots also have this character due to their density, limited open space, relative amount of impervious surface devoted to buildings and parking lots, and increased building enclosure.

The primary difference in urban and auto-urban characters is the role of the automobile in its site design. Rather than buildings oriented to the street as in an urban setting like that found in Downtown, auto-urban environments are characterized by large parking lots surrounding the buildings, such as that found at the Mall, Wal-Mart and Lowes.

Although the development intensity of auto-urban areas is usually less than that found within an urban setting, this is commonly due





to lower land values and design preference as opposed to development regulations. Auto-urban uses require a significant amount of space for high levels of automobile dependent interaction, i.e. large surface parking lots with multiple points of ingress/egress. As a result, buildings are constructed at the back of the site nearest neighboring uses and away from their roadway frontage. Auto-urban uses also have a greater reliance on site access thereby adding to the number of driveways and access points. The result is expansive parking areas that dominate the front setback and thus, the character of the development.

The impact of accommodating the automobile as is typical of contemporary development is a primary determinant in the character of an auto-urban environment. Auto-urban uses - with very few exceptions - consume more land for streets, parking and other vehicular use areas than is covered by buildings, which commonly exceeds a two-to-one ratio. This type of development design demands large sites and proximity to a high volume roadway, which diminishes the importance of architecture and results in reduced open space and therefore, elimination of natural features.

**Suburban Character.** This community character type is very different from the urban and auto-urban types. The distinguishing factors of a suburban character are an increased open space - both on individual sites and cumulatively throughout a development - and the preservation or use of vegetation within and between developments, which helps to create a more even balance between building mass and "green mass". Rather than creating a sense of enclosure by buildings as in an urban environment, trees and vegetation form a very different sense of enclosure. Therefore, open space and vegetative cover are essential elements in creating a suburban space.

The physical distinction between a suburban and urban (or auto-urban) character is the level of use intensiveness or magnitude of activity affecting adjacent uses. Suburban environments are sought as relief from more intensive urban settings thereby leading to the popularity of contemporary neighborhoods denoted for their larger lots, privacy fences, and open areas.

There are numerous examples of suburban character throughout the community. Perhaps the best example is the mature neighborhood along Broadway. In this area a tree-lined street and blend of traditional housing styles help to form its attractive character. While the newer subdivisions also exhibit a suburban character, it is quite different from more traditional neighborhoods as a result of the curvilinear street patterns, contemporary "box-like" housing styles, and consistent setbacks. Enhancing the suburban character of these areas may include

varying lot sizes, housing styles and setbacks; integrating more open space throughout the developments; and the use of vegetation along the streets and on each lot to increase the vegetative cover.

All too often the open space that contributed to the suburban character of a neighborhood is abutting land that is not yet developed and open views that are not yet closed. As in the case of many neighborhoods in Shawnee, particularly those that are on the edge of town or those that currently abut vacant land, the adjacent views that contribute to the rural small-town character are temporary rather than permanent. The natural open space and views of the landscape are “borrowed” from the adjoining land. Consequently, as additional development occurs abutting these existing neighborhoods, the character will also change. This is an important consideration as to the design of new subdivisions and whether they use the adjacent land or incorporate permanent open space into the development to sustain its original character.

In each of the neighborhoods in Shawnee, one-third to one-half of the homes has views of “open space” across the street or behind their lots. Additionally, the community is currently surrounded by agricultural land, which further contributes to the value and enjoyment of homeowners and thus, the small town community character. Most of this space, however, is borrowed until it is developed, which often leads to a dissatisfaction of homeowners as there are proposals to develop the adjacent land. Therefore, to maintain these views and achieve the community character expressed as desirable by the residents, this borrowed open space must be incorporated into each development. One means of achieving this character is by



Suburban Residential



Suburban Estate



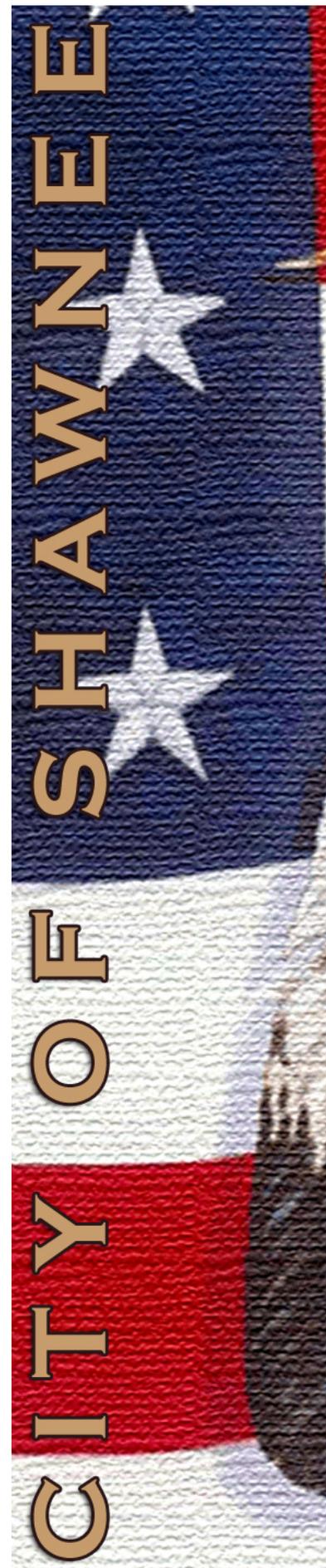
Rural Countryside



Rural Agricultural



Natural





clustering development thereby maintain an equal or higher density while preserving permanent open space.

**Estate.** This suburban character type is becoming more common with the golf course development along Bryan Road as well as large lot rural subdivisions that are developing in the outlying areas around the community. An estate character requires low density development on larger properties (typically one acre or larger) thereby producing a visual openness. As a result of larger lot sizes, open space and vegetation are intended to be the more dominate views while the buildings are to be apparent yet secondary to the landscape. Dependent upon the size of the home and its percent coverage and location on the lot, the estate character may closer resemble a larger version of the typical suburban character. To achieve an estate character, the design of these subdivisions must actively seek to imitate more rural areas through the use of rural street sections without sidewalks, vast open space throughout the development, the use of rural fence types and/or hedgerows to divide properties, the preservation or planting of native vegetation along property boundaries, and generous building setbacks on all sides.

**Rural.** This character class includes three types - countryside, agricultural, and natural. The areas surrounding Shawnee are typical of a rural character as a result of the community's freestanding nature and the prevailing agricultural landscape. Similar to the transition from the urban to suburban character classes, the visible distinction of the rural character is the importance of the natural landscape – rather than buildings - as the dominant visual feature. Agricultural activities and natural areas are the dominant land use rather than conventional suburban and estate residential development.

**Countryside.** This type of rural character includes sparse residential acreages, which are often in the ex-urban (the area beyond the city limits) areas where the first signs of suburbanization are present. Examples of a countryside character may be seen in the outlying areas around Shawnee where dwellings are on larger acreages. The common fate of these areas is often an eventual conversion to a suburban estate (more dense) character as additional acreages are developed in near proximity to these rural areas. Very low intensities are needed to preserve a countryside character, which can be achieved by vegetative screening and locating homes where they are less visible. This character type may be sustained through stringent limits on minimum lot sizes or permanent protection of prime agricultural land and open space.

**Agricultural.** The character of these rural areas is dominated by agricultural use where homes are an accessory to the farming

operation. While agriculture may also be a dominant land use in the “countryside” areas, which accommodate a rural residential lifestyle while allowing agricultural use to continue, in the more rural areas it is the intended and nearly sole use. The landscape is accented by farmsteads, barns, fences lining farm fields and areas for livestock, and a virtually unbroken horizon. These elements contribute to its rural character.

**Natural.** The character of natural rural areas constrain development due to features such as streams and floodplain or large heavily vegetated areas. These areas may be found along the River and its tributaries, around Twin Lakes and scattered around Shawnee.

## CITYWIDE CONSIDERATIONS

Following are considerations for reinforcing and maintaining the community’s image as “Small Town America” while also improving general quality of life and appearance issues:

### *FORM A COMMUNITY EDGE*

Establishing a notable physical identity begins with forming a definitive edge marking the points of entry and exit to the community. In order for Shawnee to be noticeable to passers-by along I-40 – beyond casual notice of the mall and several hotels and restaurants – it is essential for there to be gateways to demark the entry to the community and to visually portray the community’s desired image. More, from an economic development perspective, there must be something that attracts their attention and invites them into the community. To do so, an edge or boundary must be established distinguishing between City (urban) and County (rural) development.

### *PRESERVE OPEN SPACE*

Preserving adequate open space accomplishes multiple community objectives, including provision of areas for public recreational use, protection of environmentally sensitive and valued lands, conservation of natural resources, and buffering between adjacent uses. The incorporation of open space within both residential and nonresidential development contributes significantly to the character of development and the identity of the community. Open space affords the opportunity to enhance the green appearance of the community, sustain linear greenways such as the river and its tributaries, increase the amount of open space abutting the street frontages of businesses, allow internal landscaping within developments both both aesthetic and environmental reasons, and to provide sufficient separation and buffering between abutting uses.





### *SMALL TOWN DEVELOPMENT FEATURES*

Many of the features recommended throughout the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan have been developed with the intent of reinforcing the themes of a “small town living.” For example, reduced street width, particularly along local roadways, makes local streets safer while also pulling homes closer together. Reduction of required front yard setbacks in addition to narrow streets further reduces the corridor and creates a more comfortable “outdoor room” for pedestrians. While these and similar adjustments appear minor and inconsequential, they do have an impact on pedestrian activity, communication among neighbors, and sense of responsibility for quality of life in the neighborhood. Sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting, and addition of amenities and mixed uses into the neighborhood further enhance the social and physical traits associated with “small town living.”

### *COMMON ELEMENTS FOR THE STREETScape*

Common themes are important for occasionally reminding individuals of the initial impression received upon entering Shawnee. The streetscape provides an appropriate means of supporting a common theme for a variety of reasons, including the fact that the public sector has more control over activity within the street right of way, the majority of individuals formulate an opinion of appearance and image while traveling along roadways, and it permits the city to set the example that is expected to be followed by private entities in development, redevelopment and ongoing maintenance. Common streetscape elements may range from common light standards with occasional “reminder” banners to redesigned intersections with materials changes and the Shawnee logo. A strategy for incorporating common theme elements may be to develop a design scheme to be implemented in phases along initial corridors and with initial modifications with infill activity to be completed over time.

### *IMPROVED WAYFINDING SYSTEM*

Directional signs and public information signs can also serve to provide a common thread throughout the community that improves appearance, but is particularly useful to guests unfamiliar with the best route to downtown from I-40 or location of public parking areas. Many communities have successfully utilized “wayfinding” systems as a means of creating an initial common element throughout the community that is also attractive and uniquely designed to evoke the desired image of Shawnee. This may be a particularly useful concept for Shawnee because of its increased desirability as a stopping point for tourists and because of the number of attractions in the community.

*ENHANCE THE CHARACTER OF DEVELOPMENT*

In addition to the overall image and attractiveness of the community, it is important to recognize the character and appearance of individual districts and areas. As developed in Chapter Four, Land Use, there are character districts within the community that are unique as a result of their uses, but more importantly the density, scale and intensity of uses. The character of these areas is defined by the type and form of development as well as the design and layout of each site. There are unique design features that contribute to the character of these areas. For instance, an urban setting exists in Downtown with its sense of street enclosure resulting from limited or zero front and side setbacks, high floor area ratios and generally a minimum two-story building height. The developing commercial corridor along Harrison Street has an auto-urban character caused by large building setbacks from the street, parking lots that dominate the front yard reflecting its auto orientation and limited public open space and landscape surfaces. The education campus surrounding OBU and St. Gregory College is suburban in character with large expanses of open space. Sustaining and enhancing the character of these areas can be accomplished through appropriate development regulations and design standards.

Preserving and further enhancing the definition and identity of the individual character districts will add to the image and visual appeal of Shawnee. Accomplishing this vision, however, is not without a plan and implementation tools specifically designed to achieve the desired outcomes. First and foremost, the form of individual developments must contribute to the character by way of its scale, bulk, height, layout and density. Secondly, urban design treatments and features such as architectural style, use of specific building materials, uniform signage, landscaping and other amenities may be used to generate a unique design theme for each area.

**CONCEPTS FOR CHARACTER DISTRICTS**

The Image and Character Workshop conducted February 10<sup>th</sup> offered participants an opportunity to apply preferred elements to a design scheme for each of the character districts of Shawnee. Following the workshop, recommendations by participants were further enhanced to produce a series of conceptual, broad standards. It is important to note that the following concepts are meant to portray a possible image for each area, *not* to establish specific recommendations or standards. Concepts shown are related to commercial and industrial districts and correspond with discussion in *Chapter 4, Land Use*.





## DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

Downtown is already an area in which individuals are both sensitive to its needs as a recognizable district and anxious to see continued results. The image of downtown is already largely established based upon ideas of history, tradition, and its role as the true “heart” of Shawnee. Concepts to reinforce these themes include:

- ◆ Reinforce walkability in downtown through pedestrian scale amenities with attention to detail.
- ◆ Sidewalks along the Main Street with accents such as addition of faux brick.
- ◆ Liberal incorporation of street furniture that accents the historic character of the community.
- ◆ Incorporation of vegetation into the downtown area, but particularly into open spaces.
- ◆ Off-street parking areas that are screened using vegetation and other well designed features; well lit using standards that accent the historic character of the community; landscaping within the parking area; and alternating materials or other means to designate pedestrian pathways.
- ◆ Enhanced points of entry into downtown, particularly the entry from Harrison that may include signage, public art, water features, banners, vegetation, or other means.
- ◆ Public art or a major water feature.
- ◆ Preserved strong “streetwall” along main roadways in downtown (the “wall” created by buildings along a corridor) by minimizing removal of structures, particularly without replacement by development complementary to surroundings in scale and architectural detail.
- ◆ Preserved scale, form and character indicative of downtown.
- ◆ Improved maintenance, rehabilitation and reuse of existing structures in poor condition that could add to the character of the area.
- ◆ Possible modification/redevelopment of structures that are incompatible with the preferred scale, character and architectural theme of the area.

## UPTOWN DISTRICT

Several individuals indicated some concern with the term “Uptown” in description of this area. Regardless of the appropriate title, the area near Shawnee Mall represents another commercial center for the community with an atmosphere and character that is to be decidedly different than downtown. Building upon its character as an auto-urban environment, the district could reinforce the small-town theme, but should also exhibit energy. Concepts for image include:

- ◆ Aesthetic gateways along I-40 welcoming visitors to the City of Shawnee. Gateways may include signage and other aesthetic features such as landscaping, public art and lighting.
- ◆ Use of shared signage and state-provided interstate information signs as opposed to multiple pole signs as a means of attracting and informing tourists.
- ◆ Development of parking garages to the rear of Shawnee Mall or where otherwise appropriate to allow for development of additional commercial structures in existing parking areas near I-40.
- ◆ Increased landscaping and screening along I-40 and throughout the Uptown District, particularly in parking areas as needed to reduce the visual impact of extensive parking areas.
- ◆ Increased density and mix of uses to attract individuals that require immediate access to I-40 for commuting purposes.
- ◆ Architectural standards designed to maintain a general commonality of design without stringent requirements, such as scale, cornice treatment, materials, and pedestrian amenities (such as awnings or overhangs).
- ◆ Incorporation of limited pedestrian amenities to aid in creating a more versatile environment, but with the understanding that the area will remain largely auto-urban.
- ◆ Development of landmarks such as a water feature or public art.

### **INDUSTRIAL “PARK”**

The image of an industrial park is in fair contrast to the existing industrial activity along Harrison, Wolverine and Kickapoo from the standpoint of form. However, many of the features found in sites such as the ExxonMobil facility already exhibit the open, landscaped campus concept of a business park. The image is, in many ways, an opportunity to present an organized, efficient system designed to present a visually appealing atmosphere that intentionally protects passersby from the unappealing aspects of industrial activity. Concepts include:

- ◆ An internal access to facilities along interior collector and local roadways instead of heavily traveled roads such as Kickapoo and Harrison Streets;
- ◆ Design standards, particularly along the periphery of the industrial park that address issues such as landscaping, open space, screening, lighting, signage, access management and building materials;
- ◆ An integrated drainage system as opposed to individual retention areas that can be visually pleasing, environmentally friendly and better address storm drainage;





- ◆ Off-site directional signage as part of the community wayfinding system that offers a desired and most appropriate route to the park.

### **AIRPORT DISTRICT**

The Airport District is intended to function as a commercial and industrial business center for the City of Shawnee. The image of the district may choose to reflect its role as a place of commerce and aviation. Pedestrian amenities will be less important in this district, except in enhancements to the trail system. Concepts for design enhancement include:

- ◆ Increased landscaping along roadways, but particularly in coordination with other screening methods to reduce the impact of parking areas, loading areas and storage.
- ◆ Enhancements to the trail system such as trail furniture and landscaping (lighting would be prohibited due to potential interference with aviation activities).
- ◆ Guidance on structural materials that may include front facade treatments, appropriate use of metal on structures.
- ◆ Minimal design standards sufficient to establish general themes for the area without prohibiting creative development.
- ◆ Mix of landscaping, public art and well-tended natural areas on sites of high visibility that are unavailable for development due to line-of-flight restrictions.

### **TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS**

The Technology Campus offers an opportunity to highlight the unique opportunities available when creating an area that combines education, research and limited industrial activity with other accessory uses. The dynamic mix is an image of energy contained within the setting of open spaces and its small town surroundings. Concepts include:

- ◆ Architectural standards that complement the Gordon Cooper Technology Center but also allow for creative design techniques with guidelines focused upon materials, scale, height, and mass.
- ◆ Ample landscaped, open spaces with liberal use of pedestrian amenities and interconnectivity.
- ◆ Shared access and parking that is well landscaped along the periphery and interior that also offers aesthetic, “dark sky” lighting points.
- ◆ Common signage predominantly limited to ground signs and building signs indicative of a professional campus.
- ◆ Integration of a major landmark such as public art or a water feature that could take advantage of an integrated stormwater drainage system.

## HARRISON COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Of all of the districts, that which is perhaps most difficult to imagine is the future of the Harrison Commercial Corridor, largely because of the image it currently delivers is one of relative confusion. However, the corridor also offers tremendous opportunity as a dynamic bridge between downtown and the commercial areas along I-40. Concepts proposed to revitalize the image presented along Harrison include:

- ◆ Development, over time, of a loose, but unified, architectural theme that focuses on specific building materials, design, detail, frontage needed to establish a stronger “street wall”, and addition of pedestrian amenities.
- ◆ Shared parking that, when possible, is moved to the rear of the site and includes ample landscaping, screening from surrounding uses, pedestrian amenities, and improved access management.
- ◆ Shared access points that improve safety, but also reduce a sense of “chaos” that can be created along the streetscape.
- ◆ Shared signage and ground signage as opposed to existing pole signs as well as overall reduced signage.
- ◆ Integration of street trees and landscaping along Harrison to further reduce the perception of a “wide corridor” and soften the impact of substantial strip development.
- ◆ Enhanced pedestrian amenities including sidewalks with aesthetic treatments and limited street furniture that recognizes the areas auto-urban character but seeks to add moderate pedestrian activity.
- ◆ Human scale lighting incorporated into vehicular scale street lights, including aesthetic standards and the potential for banners.
- ◆ Recognizable opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross Harrison at intersections and, when needed, midpoints in the roadway using materials and techniques that enhance driver awareness such as signage and changes in roadway materials.

## EXTENDED EDUCATION CAMPUS

One of the benefits of the presence of Oklahoma Baptist and St. Gregory’s Universities is the example of quality design offered by these education institutions. An image of the area focuses on education and the possible integration of residential activity into that area, but also the expansion of education and medical related services. The concept for this area includes:

- ◆ Continued emphasis on quality architectural design utilizing materials, scale and features that are prominent in a professional, institutional environment.





- ◆ Liberal use of pedestrian amenities within the streetscape and in open areas that increase the “walkability” of the area.
- ◆ Continued use of landmarks throughout the campus that can serve as “image makers” but also permit interaction with pedestrians.
- ◆ Ample open spaces that preserve the appearance of the area as a campus in a small town community.
- ◆ Incorporation of pedestrian scale lighting and additional aesthetic features such as banners.
- ◆ Change of materials in the roadway, such as faux brick or faux stone, to indicate pedestrian crossings or intersections that are likely to be used by pedestrians.

## OTHER DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

### MANAGING LAND USE INTENSITY

From a community character perspective, the use of properties is not as important as the design factors that contribute to its intensity. In other words, the scale and bulk of a building in relation to the site, the abutting street(s) and lot lines, and adjacent buildings as well as the building coverage and extent of impervious surfaces devoted to parking, loading and other vehicular use areas are better indicators of character than land use itself. To adequately manage development intensity the zoning ordinance must be amended to include provisions to effectively control development scale and form. Measures that evaluate the performance of development include:

- ◆ An *Open Space Ratio (OSR)* measures the proportion of a residential site that remains undeveloped and is permanently designated as open space, which excludes private land (lots) and rights-of-way. Use of this performance measure is effective to protect sensitive natural areas, to provide space available for use by the public (versus private open space), and to sustain the visual character of neighborhoods.
- ◆ An *Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR)* reflects the proportion of a site occupied by impervious surfaces, including buildings, streets and sidewalks, parking and other paved areas. This measure is a more accurate estimation of use intensity than building coverage alone. In addition to the impacts on character, managing the amount of impervious cover has benefits for stormwater runoff, water quality, aquifer recharge, and the microclimate of an area by increasing temperatures.
- ◆ *Density*, commonly expressed in dwelling units per acre, measures the intensity of residential land use. The permitted densities of the residential districts in the zoning ordinance are not explicitly stated, but are determined by the provisions for minimum lot size and lot width and other dimensional requirements. As a result, the density that is allowed by the

district (simply calculated by dividing an acre by the minimum lot size) cannot be achieved due to land required for streets, parks and other improvements. Development of a site with any constraining features, such as floodplain, further limits the allowable density resulting in a declining development efficiency. Therefore, heavily constrained sites generally remain undeveloped because the regulations do not allow sufficient density to make development feasible. As an alternative, use of a density factor measuring the number of dwelling units per acre of net buildable land allows variations of a building site to be accommodated without a penalty of reduced development efficiency.

- ◆ A *Floor Area Ratio (FAR)* is the equivalent of density for nonresidential uses. An FAR is calculated by dividing the total floor area of all buildings by the total lot area. This measure of intensity allows the flexibility necessary to ensure an appropriate bulk and scale of buildings in relation to the site and in the context of surrounding uses.
- ◆ A *Landscape Surface Ratio (LSR)* is a measure of all pervious surfaces on a nonresidential site (the inverse of the impervious surface ratio). Use of this measure effectively manages intensity by balancing the portions of a site devoted to green space versus those covered by impervious surfaces. Use of the landscape surface area allows for buffering between uses, internal landscaping on the site, preservation of existing vegetation, and green space within the streetscape area abutting street right-of-way.

## **BUFFERYARDS**

Contributing to development character is provision for adequate separation and buffering between adjacent uses. As required by the current zoning ordinance, buffering is most needed between uses that exhibit widely varying intensities, such as single family residential and intensive commercial or industrial development. The current fencing requirements in the higher density (R1-Z) and multiple family (R-3), commercial (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-5 and CP) and industrial (I-1, I-2, and I-3) districts require an opaque, ornamental fence, wall or dense evergreen shrub of not less than six feet high, regardless of the height and bulk of the building or the magnitude of activity on the site. In addition, the current regulations require an increased side yard setback, based on building height, for commercial uses abutting a residential district, which acknowledges height as an important intensity factor. The industrial districts require a constant 50 foot rear yard setback and a reduced street side setback when adjacent to a residential district. The performance-based measure adjusting the side yard setback according to height is less in the Restricted Light Industrial District (I-1) than any of the less intensive commercial districts.





A performance-based approach to buffering results in varying standards according to the intensity of the use. Within each class of bufferyard there are several options available, which offers flexibility in the design of sites and choices as to the cost tradeoffs. Applying this technique in Shawnee would mean, for instance, that more intensive commercial uses such as Lowes and the Mall (exhibiting large buildings and surface parking areas; increased traffic, noise and light; and a higher level of activity) would require a larger buffer with greater opacity than a less intensive commercial use such as a bank or small office building.

The variables that are used to differentiate buffers include distance (width), types of plan materials (canopy and understory trees, evergreens/conifers, and shrubs), plant density and land form (berms). Combinations of these factors are used to create multiple options for adequate buffering between adjacent uses with differing intensities. For example, a wider bufferyard with more dense planting would be required to separate industrial and residential uses than between varying densities of residential uses.





# CHAPTER EIGHT

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## GROWTH CAPACITY

### INTRODUCTION

The City of Shawnee is enjoying a period of steady growth. In fact, Shawnee is the rare community that currently seems to have control over its destiny. The combination of two universities, a technology center, a general aviation airport, proximity to Oklahoma City, and location along Interstate 40 coupled with a strong sense of small town character make Shawnee a community that could be appealing to most Americans. The Comprehensive Plan is designed to build upon these resources, enhance overall quality of life and, if the community so desires, allow for growth.

With growth and demand comes the need to address supply and capacity. From a resident's perspective capacity is the difference between feeling safe and unsafe, inconvenienced or inconvenienced, healthy or unhealthy. Capacity is the ability to adequately provide available land, an appropriate balance of uses, a quality street network, water and wastewater service, ample park space, and adequate health and safety services for both existing and new residents and businesses.

The Growth Capacity Element specifically responds to four important questions:

- ◆ What are current conditions?
- ◆ What stands in the path of growth?
- ◆ What is the preferred method of growth?
- ◆ How does the City get there?

To some degree, growth capacity has been addressed by prior chapters. A vision has been established. Issues related to land use, transportation,

housing and image have been discussed and solutions for future development have been established. The Growth Capacity Element summarizes the various resource and policy decisions already discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan related to growth. It also describes the state of additional resources such as water and wastewater that are important to continued development. At the same time it examines local constraints on growth such as floodplain and the need to increase household income. Finally, the element presents strategies for creating a formal growth policy for the City of Shawnee.

## KEY GROWTH CAPACITY ISSUES

**Sufficient resources and revenue.** As discussed, the ability to grow hinges upon the ability to successfully meet land use, housing, transportation, water, wastewater and other needs that impact quality of life. The majority of resources are met by the public sector, particularly the City of Shawnee. Providing quality amenities requires an adequate stream of revenue that is generally derived from the local tax base. Increasing the quality of amenities cannot occur without added cost. Therefore, the City of Shawnee will be left with three alternatives. The community can opt to shift resources between programs or projects, which will result in reducing the quality of other amenities or services. Raising taxes to increase revenue is a relatively unpopular activity. A third alternative is to increase the tax base by increasing the income and buying power of the average Shawnee household and by attracting additional businesses to the community.

**Existing development constraints.** Location of the City of Shawnee and the historic development pattern of the community result in several physical constraints that impact the extent and pattern of growth. Floodplains, for example, are an item that can be addressed through flood improvements. At the same time, waterways add a distinctive feature to a community that could serve as a marketing and quality of life tool. The presence of railroads impact the community in both negative and positive ways, depending upon adjacent land uses. The lack of water and wastewater impacts lot sizes and development potential. At the same time, strategically limiting the availability of infrastructure can limit sprawl.

**Growth policies.** The policies enacted by the City of Shawnee and surrounding governments, including the tribal nations, have a direct impact upon the ability to adequately provide services and ensure that growth occurs in a desired manner. Several goals, objectives and action statements have been established throughout the Comprehensive Plan that impact the intensity and pattern of growth in and around Shawnee. Promoting infill development, for example, is a policy that impacts the inner city,





but also effects new construction and the location of development. Improved or new roadways can trigger land speculation, redevelopment and new development. At the same time, planning for growth requires other important choices regarding annexation, the need for adequate facilities, and the level of growth that is desirable.

## **GROWTH CAPACITY GOALS**

Description of all of the goals related to growth capacity would, in effect, include nearly all of the goals discussed throughout this Comprehensive Plan. Rather than duplicate each of these, the Growth Capacity Element features goals that compliment those previously discussed throughout the document.

Regarding additional plans for growth, Shawnee should be recognized as a community that focuses upon:

- ◆ A healthy living environment that includes revenue streams sufficient to meet community needs;
- ◆ Adequate, quality services, facilities and programs to serve existing and new development; and,
- ◆ Strategic management of growth to encourage healthy, sensible, appealing, and cost effective development patterns.

## **GROWTH CAPACITY OBJECTIVES & ACTIONS**

### **BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY**

**Goal One:** A healthy living environment that includes revenue streams sufficient to meet community needs.

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Enhance the buying power of Shawnee residents and households.
- ◆ Increase the number of residents and employees contributing to the local tax base.
- ◆ Encourage new development and redevelopment in the community.
- ◆ Expand the amount of visitors to the community as well as their general length of stay.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Conduct an assessment of existing buying power in Shawnee as well as the community's role as a regional commercial and employment center.
- ✓ Examine and revise existing economic development strategies to incorporate and implement the vision of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ✓ Create new development opportunities through adaptive reuse and by redeveloping economically unproductive

sites. Similarly, consider methods of enhancing or redeveloping marginally productive sites.

- ✓ Increase opportunities for entrepreneurship particularly in areas such as downtown where specialty services are most appropriate.
- ✓ Enhance coordination between the local education network, including the public school system, Seminole Junior College, Gordon Cooper Technology Center, OBU, and St. Gregory's and area business and industry.
- ✓ Consider research and development opportunities as an additional bridge between Gordon Cooper Technology and local industry, as well as a means of attracting additional business.
- ✓ Develop a modular housing initiative between local builders, the modular housing industry and Gordon Cooper Technology Center including a location to develop modular housing in Shawnee.
- ✓ Build upon the resources of the community, including the Expo Center, as a means of increasing areawide events and establishing a stronger tourism market.

## **ADEQUATE RESOURCES & SERVICES**

**Goal Two:** Adequate, quality services, facilities and programs to serve existing and new development.

### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Ensure adequate land is available for growth, particularly in areas where growth is desired or anticipated.
- ◆ Provide services and facilities that exceed needed capacity as well as expectations of the general public.
- ◆ Coordinate with regional entities to improve communication and protect the future interests of the City of Shawnee.

### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Establish criteria for annexation that will allow area residents and businesses to understand the reasons for annexation as well as the conditions under which a request for annexation may occur.
- ✓ Strategically annex areas of anticipated growth as well as those sites that impact the physical, visual and economic well-being of Shawnee, including areas east of the city where residential growth is likely to occur and locations along Interstate 40.
- ✓ Establish adequate public facilities requirements in coordination with discussion of impact fees.
- ✓ Incorporate a variety of municipal services and facilities into discussion and criteria for determination of adequate public facilities including water, wastewater, storm drainage, law enforcement, fire protection, emergency health, parks, and libraries.





- ✓ Maintain capacity for water and sewer above the required limits in order to ensure room for growth and also as a tool to encourage quality growth by surrounding jurisdictions seeking agreements to use Shawnee's resources.
- ✓ Continue in efforts to build coordination between the City of Shawnee and surrounding sovereign Native American tribes to enhance fire and police service.
- ✓ Consider a growth capacity summit between Shawnee, the sovereign tribes, and other relevant entities to build awareness, establish communication and ensure that efforts are made to ensure quality growth throughout the region.
- ✓ Research and promote proven and cost effective alternative methods of providing services such as wastewater and storm drainage where such alternatives will improve the network.

### **SENSIBLE GROWTH**

**Goal Three:** Strategic management of growth to encourage healthy, sensible, appealing, and cost effective development patterns.

#### *POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES*

- ◆ Appreciate the constraints facing Shawnee and, when possible, utilize them to the community's advantage.
- ◆ Adopt and implement the various actions throughout the Comprehensive Plan that assist in maintaining the capacity for future growth.

#### *POSSIBLE ACTIONS*

- ✓ Protect and utilize open spaces, particularly those where development activity is restricted such as floodplains and the Air Approach Zones, as natural and possibly recreational resources.
- ✓ Examine current parks plans to determine if local floodplains are proposed to be fully utilized as greenspaces connecting the community.
- ✓ Implement the actions discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan as a means of improving area quality of life while also better utilizing resources.
- ✓ Inventory existing gaps in development that may be improved, if necessary, and marketed for use or reuse.
- ✓ Examine best practices throughout the country to determine if they are applicable for use in Shawnee including infill incentives, development techniques and other methods that improve capacity.
- ✓ Provide incentives to encourage development within proximity to the existing urban area and within areas of preferred development, including added density or assistance with infrastructure development.

## CONSTRAINTS TO GROWTH

Constraints to development exist in every community across the country. In some cases, the constraints are severe. For example, The City of Midwest City is virtually landlocked with a significant amount of potentially available land restricted to preserve the AICUZ (Air Installation Compatible Use Zone) for Tinker Air Force Base. The City of Shawnee, on the other hand, enjoys relatively few constraints. Surrounding land is relatively available. The infrastructure system is in sound condition with no major limitations. Topography is not an obstacle and proximity to Oklahoma City ensures a ready supply of incoming residents or businesses.

Market constraints have been addressed throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Constrictions in the housing market that could potentially cause an increasing problem have been recognized and addressed. General land use has been analyzed to ensure that adequate space and a mix of uses is available in coming decades. The future mobility system proposes improvements to address continued movement of Shawnee to the east as well as an anticipated stretch of new development along Interstate 40. Actions are also proposed to ensure that the image of Shawnee is enhanced to increase marketability and quality life.

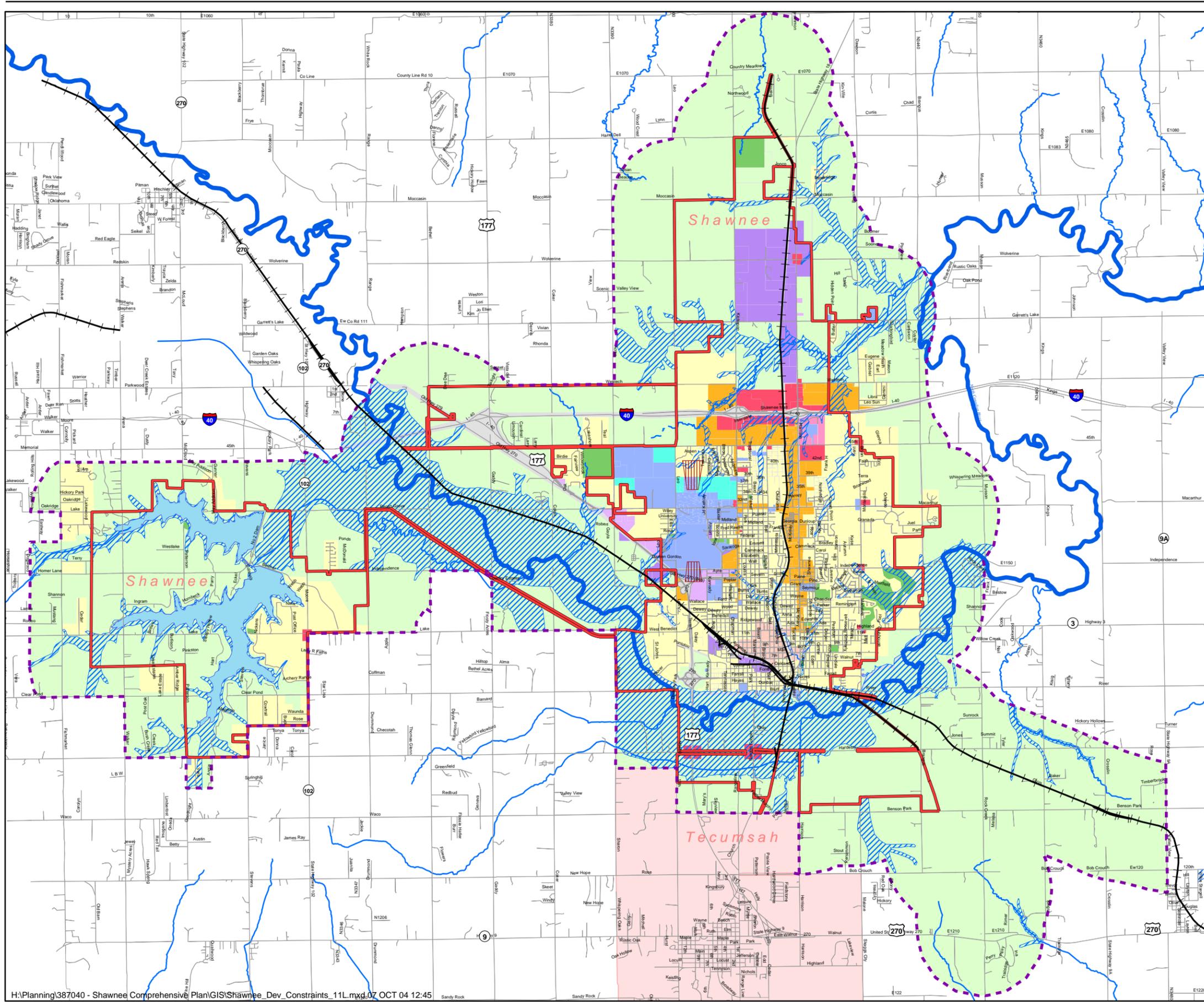
Following are constraints for consideration in discussion of growth capacity and development patterns. *Figure 8.1, Development Constraints*, exhibits the two physically obvious obstacles to development in Shawnee – floodplains and the Airport Approach Zones for the Shawnee Municipal Airport. While these and other issues facing Shawnee should not be considered insurmountable, they should be appreciated for their potential impact on the fabric of the community.

### FLOODPLAIN

Several areas within the City of Shawnee as well as the surrounding planning area are within the 100 year floodplain, primarily as a result of proximity to the North Canadian River and its tributaries. Floodplain along the riverway is most pronounced along the southern boundary of Shawnee, as well as areas outside of city limits to the east and west. Tributaries create some flooding opportunities within the urban area of Shawnee as well as to the north in an area separating Shawnee Mall from local industry. Areas immediately adjacent to the Twin Lakes are likewise within the floodplain.

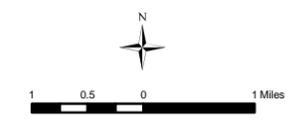
The presence of floodplains is considered to be a physical constraint to development. Local policy restricts platting within the floodplain. Elimination or major reduction of floodplain is possible, but in most areas, the environmental impact may make





**FIGURE 8.1  
DEVELOPMENT  
CONSTRAINTS**

- Constraints
- Airport Approach Zone
  - 100-Year Floodplain
- Future Land Use
- Rural Development/ Agriculture
  - Residential
  - Commercial/ Residential
  - Commercial
  - Residential/Public/ Commercial
  - Public/Commercial
  - Public
  - Residential/Public
  - Industrial Commercial
  - Industrial
  - Parks/ Open Space
  - Right of Way
  - Lake
- 2003 Shawnee City Limits
- - - Planning Area



Note:  
A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

# CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





significant changes difficult. Two channel modifications have occurred in the last two years in an effort to address overgrown vegetation rather than eliminate floodplain.

Recent national development trends suggest that the presence of floodplain, long considered an area with little value, can be a marketable asset. Today, many developers consider the presence of the protected natural areas to be a visual amenity. Floodplains provide a marvelous recreational opportunity that can connect neighborhoods and districts of the community. Thus, while the presence of floodplains may be a physical limitation, proximity to the natural area can also be viewed as an asset.

### **AIRPORTS & RAIL LINES**

Shawnee Municipal Airport provides a valuable service to residents and business owners in and around Shawnee. From the standpoint of business, the airport is an obvious amenity with substantial opportunity for expansion and enhancement. Similarly, the community benefits from several rail lines that provide resources to local industry. The presence of rail and air service increase the capacity for growth in commercial and industrial development. The airport may further enhance the capacity of higher education and medical sectors by offering private air service otherwise unavailable in many similarly sized communities.

On the other hand, physical proximity to the airport and local rail lines can be considered a constraint in discussion of residential growth. Both are considered to be uses generally incompatible with housing development, although construction techniques can reduce the most glaring issue – sound. Airport approach areas directly north and south of the airport that extend in a cone shape outward from the runway are expected to remain free of new development for safety reasons.

### **INCOMPATIBLE USES**

Generally, incompatibility between land uses exists as a result of the impacts that each use has upon the other. Farmers, for example, enjoy the option of selling land for residential development as a means of retirement or investment while homeowners enjoy the temporary agrarian surroundings. However, residents eventually begin to complain of odors, slow and heavy machinery blocking traffic and odd hours of operation while farmers become unhappy with additional trash on their property, increased pets straying into fields and irate motorists. The relationship between heavy industries, such as those along Wolverine and residential activity are even more pronounced. In each case, the capacity for growth suffers as a result of real and perceived impacts brought on by surrounding development.

This issue is primarily addressed in *Chapter 4, Land Use*, including creation of a Future Land Use Plan that promotes mixing compatible land uses while maintaining space between those that may prove problematic. In several instances, such as near the Shawnee Mall, along Harrison Street and in downtown, uses are proposed to be actively mixed between the commercial, residential and public sectors. However, in most instances, uses with an opportunity to negatively impact each other have been addressed much differently, including separation when possible.

## **WATER**

Infrastructure is absolutely essential to quality growth in and around Shawnee. While it is entirely possible to develop without municipal water and wastewater service, it is generally inefficient, adds private maintenance and increases the risk of localized problems such as a change in the water table.

The availability of water is important for two major reasons. Most obvious is the need to meet daily water demands by area residents and businesses. However, water capacity is also based on the need to fight a major fire event.

The City of Shawnee utilizes surface water from the Twin Lakes, an area within city limits but far west of the majority of Shawnee. A recent survey conducted by city engineers indicates that the two lakes combine to provide a total of 30,701 acre feet of capacity for the City of Shawnee. Additional resources are available in surrounding reservoirs if needed, including the Wes Watkins Reservoir owned in partnership with Pottawatomie County.

The City of Shawnee has a current total water treatment capacity of approximately 13.1 million gallons per day (MGD). This is largely due to an expansion of facilities at 801 South Kickapoo in 2002 adding approximately 9.0 MGD. The original plant has a capacity of more than 4 MGD but is currently not in service and may be decommissioned.

Annually average daily usage is approximately 4.4 MGD for water service provided by the City of Shawnee. In times of peak usage, water requirements have exceeded 7.5 MGD. In both cases, usage is well within the limits of the existing water treatment and supply system.

Availability of sufficient water to address a major emergency appears to be a topic of continuing discussion by local leaders. The City currently utilizes one 1,000,000 gallon water tower, three 500,000 gallon towers, and maintains a clear well with a capacity of 1,000,000 gallons at the water treatment plant. A generator is available to provide additional water in the event that





electrical power fails. However, differences in interpretation of state requirements have resulted in discussion of whether the existing program is sufficient.

Existence of water service, like wastewater service, is considered highly desirable for healthy growth at urban or suburban densities. The absence of water or wastewater service could be considered a constraint, particularly if potential development is located an extended distance from existing urban areas.

## **WASTEWATER**

Like water, the presence of adequate wastewater facilities is critical to healthy growth. Outside of municipal services, residents and businesses are forced to utilize individual systems that require unnecessarily large lots or use of storage systems.

The City of Shawnee operates two wastewater treatment plants with a current capacity to provide service to approximately 46,000 residents, significantly more than the current population. The Northside Wastewater Treatment Plant operates with a total capacity of approximately 3.0 million gallons per day and is expected to address large portion of new growth in Shawnee in coming years. The facility serves all of Shawnee north of a ridge dividing the city near Federal Street. Currently, the Northside Wastewater Treatment Plant processes approximately 1.4 MGD.

The Southside Wastewater Treatment Plant provides service to the remainder of Shawnee with the exception of one area within city limits that remains without municipal wastewater service. This facility serves the majority of the residential area of Shawnee as well as downtown. The facility has an operating capacity of approximately 3.1 MGD, but experiences an average daily rate of only approximately 2.0 MGD.

## **PREFERRED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**

Constraints facing the City of Shawnee have been compared to development principles applied throughout this Comprehensive Plan to determine a preferred growth scenario for residential development. The preferred scenario serves two purposes. First, it provides a glimpse into the areas deemed most appropriate for residential growth through a formal analytic process. Second, it serves as a source of comparison and validity against areas designated for residential use in the *Future Land Use Plan* featured in *Chapter 4, Land Use*. As shown in *Figure 8.2, Residential Growth Capacity*, results of the analysis are fairly similar to those of the Future Land Use Plan.

Figure 8.2, *Residential Growth Capacity* is not a measure of the space needed to accommodate growth anticipated in the immediate future. Rather, it is a glimpse at areas that offer the most capacity to support residential development given specific conditions. Figure 8.2 divides space within the City of Shawnee and the surrounding planning area into four distinct categories ranging from preferred sites for development to those that should be avoided.

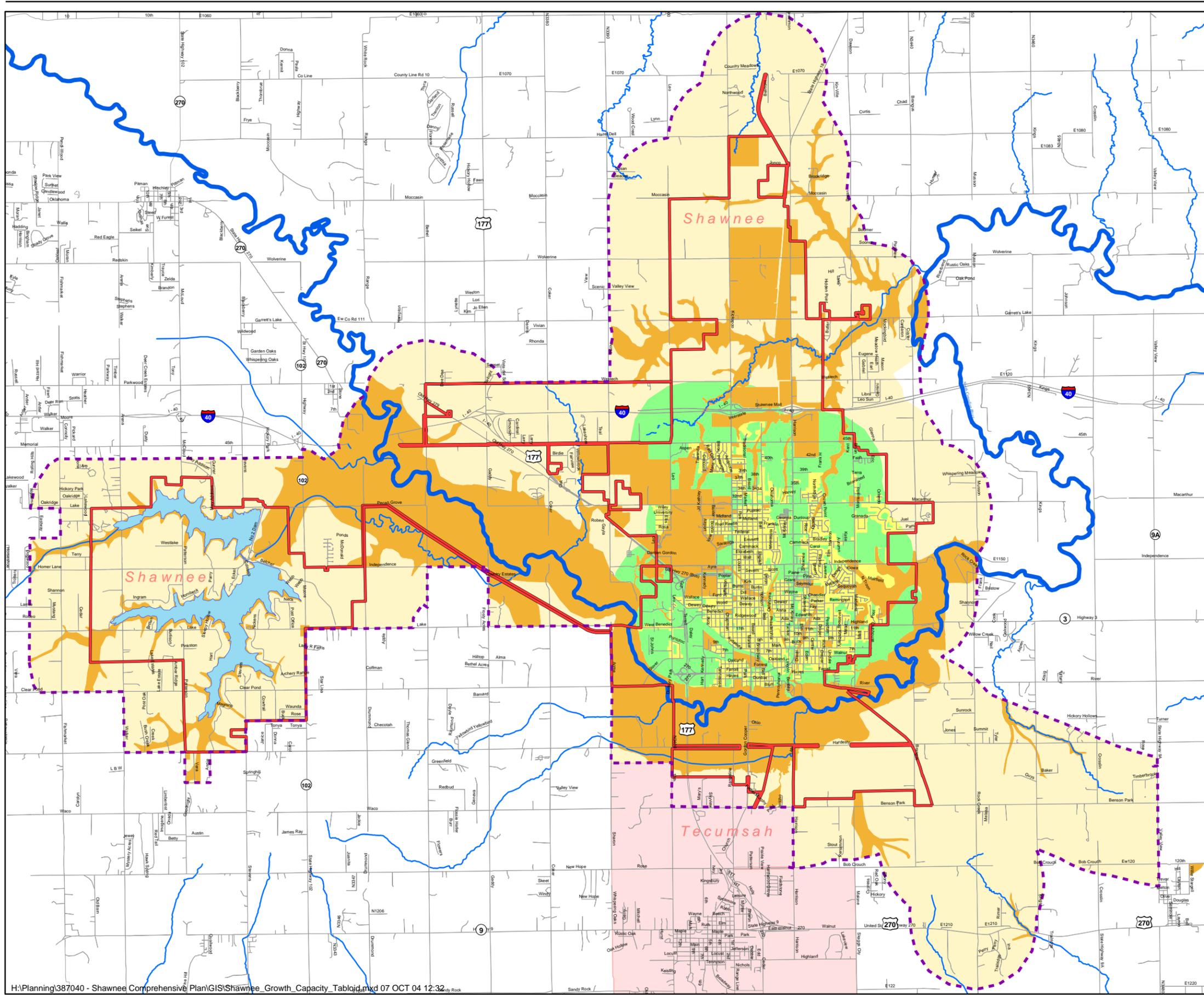
**Restricted from Residential Development.** Areas within this category include all property estimated to be located within the 100 year floodplain; existing nonresidential areas such as St. Gregory's University and the Shawnee Mall; as well as sites reserved for future nonresidential use. Areas within the Air Approach Zone of the Shawnee Municipal Airport are also included. For purposes of incompatibility, health and safety it is recommended that residential development be strongly encouraged to locate in more appropriate areas of Shawnee.

**Limited Residential Growth.** For the most part, sites that offer limited residential growth capacity include remote rural areas, locations with sporadic residential development, and the area surrounding Twin Lakes. In nearly all cases, the area lacks water or sewer service and is located sufficient distance from the urban area that providing services would be costly. If residential development is necessary in this area, it is encouraged to follow the Conservation Subdivision techniques proposed for rural hamlets in *Chapter 4, Land Use*.

**Recommended for Development.** Sites that are recommended for residential development are not necessarily the *preferred* location for homes, but a sound alternative. The majority of this area does not include water or wastewater service, although the majority exists within current municipal limits. At the same time, areas recommended for future development are within close proximity to existing services making the provision of infrastructure and other municipal services a stronger long term investment for the residents of Shawnee. Common sense suggests that certain areas within this category have better development potential than others. The most likely candidate for near term residential development includes land located to the west of existing neighborhoods and represents an extension of recent development trends. On the other hand, the area located between Farral and River Roads is also adjacent to an existing railway and less likely to see immediate activity.

**Preferred Residential Growth.** In Shawnee, preferred residential growth is proposed to occur within the existing urban area through infill activity, including continued incorporation of residential units in downtown. Infill activity is among the priorities





**FIGURE 8.2  
RESIDENTIAL  
GROWTH CAPACITY**

- Preferred Residential Growth
- Recommended For Development
- Limited Residential Growth
- Restricted From Residential Development
- 2003 Shawnee City Limits
- Planning Area



Note:  
A comprehensive plan shall not constitute zoning regulations or establish zoning district boundaries.

# CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN





established in *Chapter 4, Land Use* as a means of maintaining and improving existing neighborhoods throughout the community. Infill development benefits from the existing presence of infrastructure and ready access to the amenities of urban Shawnee.

## **SENSIBLE GROWTH**

Capacity is critically impacted by the manner in which growth occurs. For example, the impact of a redevelopment project in downtown Shawnee will have a substantially different impact on the long term costs of capacity than a project located in the rural areas surrounding Twin Lakes. Both may require similar services, but the downtown project will likely already have available infrastructure. Police and fire protection will be nearby, as well as parks, medical facilities and other resources.

Development patterns and behavior are shaped by growth strategies and requirements enacted by community leaders. Those patterns and behavior directly impact the short and long term capacities of the community for growth, ranging from the availability of land to provision of services and facilities. Sensible growth requires an understood direction in which the community would like for development to occur in order to effectively manage resources. It is not an attempt to apply onerous regulations to development or restrict growth. Rather, it encourages creative, quality development within a framework determined to be in the best interest for all of Shawnee.

*Chapter 4, Land Use*, discussed several strategies for growing sensibly, including use of infill, redevelopment, adequate public facilities requirements, planned unit development, and annexation. Other chapters continued that discussion through neighborhood revitalization strategies, appropriate location and design of mobility systems, and creation of a strong sense of place. In terms of capacity, these issues with in coordination with provision of needed infrastructure and other resources, as well as the availability of land.

## **COST EFFECTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Statistics indicate that the water and wastewater systems in Shawnee can support new construction. However, new construction comes with cost. Water and wastewater lines must be installed. Depending upon slope, lift stations may be necessary. Site runoff is certain to increase without the provision of stormwater detention and drainage. Each system is expensive to construct as well as maintain and while the initial cost of construction is often the responsibility of the developer, the long range maintenance rests with the City of Shawnee. This may not impact the immediate capacity of the existing system, but the cost

of maintenance may create a financial burden for the community over the long term.

Over the *short term*, the cost of adding capacity can be “reduced” by use of impact fees. Through impact fees the cost of adding water and sewer capacity is passed on to the buyer in an assessed fee. The fee is generally based upon the cost of any additional capacity that is required as a result of the development. Impact fees have been adopted by numerous cities throughout the country as a means of charging the cost to only those individuals that created the added demand.

Two methods can be utilized to reduce the *long term* cost of infrastructure:

**Require development to occur in proximity to existing services.** The primary long term expense of infrastructure is ongoing upkeep and improvement, including the numerous pipes required to move water, wastewater and storm drainage from one point to another. Development in proximity to existing urban activity does not have the extended cost of stretching service from existing lines to the new development. Project and maintenance costs are reduced. Communities have utilized a number of methods to require development within proximity to the existing urban area. In most extreme cases, an urban growth boundary is established to limit growth to within a designated area. Others simply apply a requirement to locate within a specific distance of existing services.

**Utilize alternative treatment systems.** The standard approach to water, wastewater and storm drainage are truly works of engineering prowess that have proven to be effective in virtually all conditions. However, a combination of new technology and natural techniques have proven to be equally capable of meeting needs in a manner that may be more effective and cost efficient, less maintenance intensive and environmentally friendly. Storm drainage, for example, is designed to quickly move stormwater to a detention area or to a waterway for dispersal. Combined with large impervious surfaces and manicured lawns, the process ensures that relatively little local stormwater permeates on site or is allowed to filter contaminants prior to entering the waterway. However, in Prairie Crossing, a development in Grayslake, Illinois, the developer utilized a “water management system” designed to improve on site permeation and infiltration. Using native grasses, a natural swale system and wetlands, the developer successfully reduced runoff by 65 percent and the amount of contaminants by 85 to 100 percent.

Similar examples exist for a variety of infrastructure alternatives. In each case, the intent is not to eliminate traditional





infrastructure systems, but to reduce required capacity or service in appropriate situations.

### **HEALTH, SAFETY & OTHER AMENITIES**

Often forgotten in discussion of capacity are services such as fire protection, law enforcement, recreation, health services, education, and other services and facilities. Location and patterns of development have a direct impact on the ability to adequately provide services. Unfortunately, many of the individuals that move to areas such as the lease lots along Twin Lakes, do so with the expectation for the same level of fire and police protection as they enjoyed while living in a Shawnee neighborhood.

Sprawl is particularly burdensome for provision of adequate services and facilities. Communities that spread with decreasing density find that financial capacity is stretched and services increased with little gain in tax revenue, particularly sales tax revenue. One obvious solution to this issue is development at increased density and in close proximity to existing development.

A second alternative is development of an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). This permits growth to occur in any area, but only after services and facilities have been made available for the area. An APFO requires all applicants for new development to demonstrate that facilities and services will be available to serve the project at the time the development is available for occupancy. Utilizing this system, Shawnee could adopt a level-of-service standard to be used as criteria for approving or denying applications. An APFO could be used for any particular public facilities or services including water, wastewater, recreation, law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency health.

### **ANNEXATION PLAN & POLICIES**

Annexation is very rarely a popular item; however, it is one of the most powerful tools available to cities for directing and influencing growth. Annexation allows Shawnee to extend its municipal services, regulations, voting privileges, and taxing authority to new territories. The city annexes to provide municipal services to developed and developing areas and to exercise regulatory authority necessary to protect public health, safety and general welfare. It is also a means of ensuring that residents and businesses that benefit from access to municipal facilities and services share in the burden of constructing and maintaining those resources.

Annexation is also a means of implementing the Comprehensive Plan. In the various elements of the plan, goals, objectives and action statements propose recommendations that could involve annexation. *Chapter 4, Land Use*, makes a number of land use

recommendations in areas outside of current municipal limits, particularly along Interstate 40 for commercial and residential activity as well as to the east of Shawnee where continued residential development is expected. *Chapter 7, Image & Design*, discusses beautification of corridors and creation of gateways into the community.

Annexation regulations are being modified across the nation as state legislatures respond to increasing public debate over annexation. Recent changes in state law in Oklahoma now require strip annexation that surrounds three sides of a parcel to have a minimum width of 300 feet. Additionally, notification is required to all persons adjacent to the strip being annexed, as well as those that are directly impacted. Fortunately, only a single area in western Shawnee is impacted by the new legislation.

Based upon findings throughout the Comprehensive Plan, recommendations for annexation policy include:

- ◆ Consider landowner-initiated annexation requests, taking into account the projected fiscal impact and less tangible “pros” and “cons” of each potential annexation.
- ◆ Establish clear guidelines within which annexations may be proposed such as potential limits on the number of acres or households, capital expenditures required to extend services, or distance from municipal limits.
- ◆ Utilize annexation to extend Shawnee’s jurisdiction in areas of anticipated growth in which the city prefers control prior to development. Areas should include “gateways” into the community and anticipated areas of residential growth to the east.
- ◆ Consider applying fiscal impact analysis techniques to assess the estimated costs of providing services against potential benefits.
- ◆ Examine the possibility of acquiring sites through annexation that may be “less than favorable” if unique health, safety, environmental, and public welfare issues are proven to be at stake.
- ◆ Extend jurisdiction to encompass critical public facilities which require protection and management through Shawnee’s development ordinances, infrastructure standards and other regulatory powers, as has been done to protect the Twin Lakes.

## COMMUNITY CAPACITY

As previously discussed, building capacity is also a matter of having the resources needed for expansion, including finances, equipment, materials, and well-trained staff. Without adequate





resources, the existing system of infrastructure and services is difficult to maintain or expand.

In Shawnee, capacity is literally tied to the tax base – specifically, the sales tax base. For capacity to increase, the amount of sales tax received by the City must increase. Certainly increasing taxes is an option. However, a better approach is to increase consumption. Three approaches are available to increase consumption, including:

- ◆ Enhanced buying power of local residents and employees;
- ◆ Increased economic development and redevelopment activity; and,
- ◆ Expanded consumption by tourists and others outside of Shawnee.

### **ENHANCING LOCAL BUYING POWER**

Household income is relatively low in the City of Shawnee. As a result, the ability to consume is likewise limited. This is termed as “local buying power” – the fiscal capacity of local households to consume, including home payments, car payments and other major expenditures. Enhancing local buying power is a matter of economics and opportunity. Higher wage jobs must be introduced into the job market. At the same time, the labor pool must be sufficiently trained to successfully fill new jobs.

The best resource for enhancing the local labor pool is Gordon Cooper Technology Center. The center is the only school in Shawnee designed to enhance the skills of the local labor pool without the need for full, four year degree. Seminole Junior College also provides opportunities, but is located outside of the community. Programs at the Gordon Cooper Technology Center are often crafted in coordination with local industries and businesses in order to provide an appropriately trained labor pool. A unique example of coordination includes a program with Tinker Air Force Base in which students are trained to become aircraft mechanics. The program is based upon a need to train new staff in light of a potential shortage as current mechanics approach retirement age. In this program, students are guaranteed employment following the completion of course work.

Other opportunities for enhancing the skills of local employees and creating job opportunities should be actively encouraged. For example, in an interesting and innovative approach to addressing housing and economic development issues, the Plan Advisory Committee proposed a unique partnership between local builders and the Gordon Cooper Technology Center. While the committee found the possibility of supporting modular housing as a midrange, affordable housing option appealing, many were concerned that an influx of modular housing could result in a loss

of area construction jobs. As an alternative, the committee suggested development of a modular unit construction facility in Shawnee that could build modular housing at any desired price range and in coordination, rather than competition, with local builders. Involvement of Gordon Cooper Technology Center would allow craftsman to be trained to work in the facility. Additionally, the facility could be utilized for research as a means of improving modular housing technology.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT**

Building capacity requires creating jobs. New development and redevelopment will be extremely important to any effort to expand the community's tax base. In addition to higher wage, higher skill jobs, the presence of new jobs increases sales tax revenues through sheer volume. Shawnee has dedicated a number of areas to commercial and industrial activity with the intent of attracting new businesses and convincing existing businesses to expand.

Economic development efforts in Shawnee are assisted through the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce and the Shawnee Economic Development Foundation, as well as other organizations in the community. The Economic Development Foundation offers assistance through a number of activities and programs including:

- ◆ Labor surveys specific to need;
- ◆ Local and state sales and ad valorem tax abatement;
- ◆ Double investment tax credits (if located within an Enterprise Zone);
- ◆ Shared ownership of industrial facilities; and,
- ◆ Support for a number of financing programs, including a revolving loan fund.

## **THE OUT OF TOWN DOLLAR**

The local economy can also be improved by looking to capture more revenue from people living *outside* of the community. From this perspective, Shawnee is in a very desirable position to increase sales tax from outside revenue by enhancing its role as:

- ◆ a regional destination for nearby residents;
- ◆ a stop for travelers on their way to another destination; and,
- ◆ a daytrip or cultural tourist attraction.

While this plan is not designed with a direct focus on economic development, many of the various action statements throughout the Comprehensive Plan can result in attracting more people from outside of the area and inviting them to spend time and money. Enhancement of the small town atmosphere of the community





and continued redevelopment of downtown Shawnee can increase the appeal of the community. Enhancing the area surrounding the Shawnee Expo Center could increase the community's attraction for hosting annual events and ensure that the visitor's experience is convenient and enjoyable. More activity near the Shawnee Mall, particularly if designed as a destination district rather than a strip of isolated commercial developments, could allow Shawnee to further become a regional alternative to traveling into Oklahoma City.

## **CITY PLANNING, REGIONAL THINKING**

The City of Shawnee appears to be fortunate to be surrounded by land available for growth. Municipal limits are currently only limited by the boundaries for the City of Tecumseh to the south. However, in this case looks are somewhat deceiving. While few municipalities bar the city's opportunities for growth, other entities do. Rural water districts in surrounding areas provide water service. The sovereign tribal nations of the Sac & Fox, Absentee Shawnee, Pottawatomie and Kickapoo spread across the immediate area. In both instances the City of Shawnee is free to annex property; however, their abilities to provide services and collect revenue are reduced. In the case of property within sovereign tribal land, the City may not collect any revenue or exert legal authority. In areas under jurisdiction of a rural water district, the city cannot provide water service or otherwise compete with the district.

Thus, while appearances indicate a nearly clear opportunity for growth, reality is that Shawnee is not entirely in control of its ability to expand. To address this, the city must be able to begin to think beyond the scope of municipal limits or the planning area to a more regional scale. Decisions made by area rural water districts, the sovereign tribes, Pottawatomie County, and the City of Tecumseh regarding growth or development policies can have a positive or negative impact upon Shawnee. For example, rural water districts, initially created to provide adequate service to area farmers, could permit poorly designed subdivisions to be developed. As a result, a tool initially designed to protect the interest and viability of farmers has become a mechanism for promoting urban sprawl.

The Growth Capacity Element recognizes the need for regional planning as led by the City of Shawnee. Regionalism does not mean that each jurisdiction give up its sense of independence. Rather, regionalism recognizes that the actions of one entity in an area have the ability to impact surrounding entities. In some cases, the impact can be positive. However, other decisions may negatively effect the surrounding area or present the region with long term consequences.

One of the most effective forms of regionalism is respect for each jurisdiction's right to independently act in the best interest of its constituents. Each entity agrees to communication and open dialog with the intent of keeping neighbors informed of local activity and seeking ways in which activities can be conducted to everyone's mutual benefit.

The City of Shawnee is currently coordinating with surrounding entities on a variety of proposed activities. The tribal nations, for example, do not necessarily have the capacity to construct a large scale water or wastewater system. In this, the sovereign tribes seek service from the City of Shawnee. The Absentee Shawnee are currently working together with municipal leadership to extend sewer service nearly six miles to the east of city limits for the purposes of building a new casino. The pressurized line will further bolster wastewater capacity in the area and may well hasten residential development in areas suggested by the Comprehensive Plan as recommended locations for expansion. In another example, the City of Shawnee has discussed the possibility of working with the Sac and Fox Tribe for purposes of construction and use of a new fire station. The Tribe would agree to provide the land and construct the facility if the City of Shawnee would be willing to operate the site.





# CHAPTER NINE

## CITY OF SHAWNEE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## IMPLEMENTATION

### INTRODUCTION

The City of Shawnee has established a vision for the future. Community leaders have coordinated to develop goals to meet that vision by addressing land use, transportation, housing, image and growth capacity. Specific action statements are now in place and awaiting completion. The foundation is complete for the future that Shawnee's residents, business owners and community leaders desire and deserve.

The next step is implementation and, by all intents, it is generally the most difficult. Initial implementation of the Comprehensive Plan is the point at which most community's falter as they attempt to bridge the gap between the grand vision and stark reality. Too often, the initial reaction is to utilize the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for land use changes or a tool to be used only as needed. In other instances, community's struggle as they attempt to determine which actions should be conducted first, by whom, and along what specific timeline.

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Shawnee is an action oriented document. It is designed for a community that wants to direct, rather than react. It is the result of numerous individuals looking to make a difference in the future of Shawnee with full knowledge that success of the plan will rest in its implementation.

The purpose of the Implementation Element is to provide the bridge between "planning" and "completing". The element includes specific recommendations designed to make implementation easier. It also includes a short term strategic plan for beginning to put the Comprehensive Plan into action.

The strategic plan is based upon coordination between community leaders. During a planning workshop, community leaders examined the various action statements found throughout the Comprehensive Plan, prioritized actions, and determined those items most appropriate for short term implementation. Each task selected for completion was further detailed to include concepts for cost, responsibility, time needed for completion and benchmarks for determining success.

## **IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following are techniques designed to improve the chances of succeeding in implementation of the Shawnee Comprehensive Plan:

### **FORM IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE**

Momentum must not be allowed to falter once the plan has been adopted. Immediately following approval of the plan, it is highly recommended that the City establish an Implementation Task Force. The role of the Task Force is to refine and prioritize the Implementation Plan and initiate action. Task Force membership may include key members of City Staff; select members of the development and business communities; individuals from other public agencies and institutions; leaders from organized civic groups; and, residents of Shawnee.

Much of the initial responsibility of the Task Force has been completed through the workshop and development of a Strategic Plan. After the first year, however, the Implementation Task Force will be charged with the tough task of honing actions beyond the information provided in the plan and revising the Strategic Plan. The Task Force will propose methods or programs to be used to implement the proposed actions, specifically identifying which agencies/ departments will be responsible for implementation, defining costs, proposing sources of funding, and establishing a time frame in which the recommended action will be accomplished.

The work of the Implementation Task Force should be short term and occur annually. The product of the Task Force should be a revised strategic plan based upon the accomplishments of the prior year and determination of actions to accomplish or initiate within the year. Departments and organizations charged with completing tasks, or aiding in their completion, can use the proposal in the budget process and in determining other needed resources. The City Council can utilize the proposal for overall budget and resource decisions as well as establishing benchmarks for departmental performance.





## **MAINTAIN CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**

Active participation has been a cornerstone of the process to create the Comprehensive Plan; however, it is even more essential as a means of implementing the plan. To do this, current and future leaders must pledge their support to maintain public involvement, awareness and commitment to the purpose and importance of the plan.

Shawnee residents shared in developing the plan's goals, objectives and proposals by participating in a Community Forum and a series of key person interviews. The many ideas and comments contributed by citizens during the plan's development were incorporated and shaped the resulting priorities and action strategies. Citizens should continue to be involved in implementation and maintenance of the plan. Advisory committees, public meetings and community workshops, open houses and public forums, newsletters, media releases, and public notices should be used to inform and involve citizens in continued planning. Methods and activities for public participation should be carefully chosen and designed to achieve meaningful and effective involvement.

## **QUALITY IS KEY**

The plan is designed to improve and enhance the quality of life for current and future residents. It is meant to provide a standard of excellence by which future development, programs and activities can be measured. It is this level of quality that is highly desired by stakeholders in the community, whether it is in terms of housing, infrastructure, a new regional park, downtown redevelopment, gateways and corridors, or simply Shawnee's approach to its future.

Quality is consistently mentioned throughout the Comprehensive Plan. It is a standard to which all elements of the plan should be held. New facilities should be designed as landmarks with an understanding of their ability to positively impact the surrounding environment. Gateways for the community should represent the character of the community. Programs created as part of the plan should establish best practices for other communities to follow.

## **MAKE SUCCESS QUICK AND CONSTANT**

A strategy used by successful organizations is to seek results early in the implementation process. By doing so, stakeholders are able to see the benefits of their involvement. Momentum is a result, which naturally solicits more involvement by persons desiring to be involved in a successful program. Some recommended actions do not bear significant budgetary obligation. These programs and activities provide an immediate opportunity to make an impact on the community, and thus on the successful implementation of this plan.

Success is a powerful tool for marketing the plan. As such, serious consideration should be given to making sure that successes are consistent throughout the implementation process. Some actions will take longer to complete than others. Those projects should commence in a timeframe that will allow for both balancing resources and constant success.

### **SOLVE PROBLEMS CREATIVELY**

In order to seek continuous improvement it is necessary to be creative and innovative in your approach to solving key issues and problems. It is this ability to overcome what may ordinarily be considered as obstacles that will demonstrate the City's willingness and ability to achieve the community vision, including the use of creative solutions. An example may include coordination between jurisdictions to seek objectives and results that may not be possible without a joint venture, such as provision of water and sewer as a means of promoting quality development that benefits Shawnee residents.

### **SHARE RESPONSIBILITY AND REWARDS**

This plan cannot be carried out by an individual or even a single department. Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan requires responsibility and accountability from a number of diverse parties. In several cases, results will not come quickly, particularly in instances that are likely to create some controversy or come at a significant expense. However, once accomplished, each task of the plan will improve area quality of life and instill a sense of pride and accomplishment in the community.

To ease effort and expense, responsibility for accomplishing the tasks of the Comprehensive Plan should also be shared by a number of individuals and organizations. By working together the community can achieve its vision, which is of benefit to all involved.

### **INTEGRATE PLANNING INTO DAILY DECISIONS**

Opportunities for integrating the plan's recommendations into other business practices and programs of the City are vital to widespread recognition of the plan as a decision-making tool. For instance, the plan's recommendations should be widely used in decisions pertaining to infrastructure improvements, proposed new development and redevelopment, expansion of public facilities, services and programs, and the capital budgeting process. The plan should be referenced often to maintain its relevance to local decisions and to support the decisions that are being made.

### **FINANCING**

There are a variety of financing tools and techniques that are available to the City, which are not commonly used by





municipalities. These tools, under the right circumstances, may be used effectively to finance public improvements and to provide incentives to private businesses. Access to grants and loans from public and private sources is a prime example from the standpoint that they are rarely used to the extent possible. Literally millions in available resources go unutilized every year, the majority of which are available to government entities or partner nonprofit organizations.

### **REQUIRING UPDATES AND IMPLEMENTATION**

To ensure that current and future elected officials, as well as the general public, remain committed to the success of the Comprehensive Plan, many communities have begun officially committing to plan implementation and maintenance. Most popular is a resolution that confirms the community's commitment to the plan and to the steps necessary to enhance area quality of life. Recommended items to incorporate into a resolution include development of an Implementation Task Force, annual updates on success of the plan by the Planning and Zoning Commission, consideration of the plan in development of budgets and in daily decisions, and a schedule of minor and major updates

### **PLAN MAINTENANCE**

The culmination of the comprehensive planning process is an implementation program that includes specific program recommendations and actions addressing each of the plan elements. The products of the implementation program include a series of specific actions for each element of the plan and linkages to implementation tools such as the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, other development-related ordinances, the City's annual budget process, longer-term capital improvements planning and potential bond financing, grant opportunities, and ongoing coordination with other public and private partners in plan implementation.

Circumstances will continue to change in the future, and the plan will require modifications and refinements to be kept up to date. Some of its proposals may be found unworkable and other solutions will continue to emerge. Needed refinements and changes should be carefully noted and thoroughly considered as part of Annual Plan Amendments and Five-Year Major Plan Updates. As changes occur, however, the Vision of the City should remain the central theme and provide a unifying focus. The plan's importance lies in the commitment of citizens to agree on the region's purposes and priorities for the future, and to apply that consensus in continuing efforts that focus on the betterment of their community. Since change is certain to occur, both the plan and the City's implementation tools should be periodically

reviewed and updated to ensure their effectiveness in achieving the desired vision, goals and objectives of the community.

### **ANNUAL PLAN AMENDMENT PROCESS**

The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is recommended that the responsibility be shared or initiated by an Implementation Task Force. Annual plan amendments will provide an opportunity for relatively minor plan updates and revisions such as changes in future land use policies, implementation actions, and review of plan consistency with ordinances and regulations. Annual plan amendments should be prepared and distributed in the form of addenda to the adopted plan. Identification of potential plan amendments should be an ongoing process by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City staff throughout the year. Citizens, property owners, community organizations and other governmental entities can also submit requests for plan amendments. Proposed plan amendments should be reviewed and approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Commission should adopt plan amendments in a manner similar to the plan itself, including public hearings and consideration of action.

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION**

The Planning and Zoning Commission should prepare an Annual Report for submittal and presentation to the City Council. The proposed, updated Strategic Plan should be a part of the Annual Report. Status of implementation for the plan should be included in the Annual Report. Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year should be included as well as recommendations for needed actions and programs to be developed and implemented in the coming year. The time schedule for preparation and submittal of the Annual Report should be coordinated with the City's annual budget development process so that the recommendations will be available early in the budgeting process.

### **MAJOR PLAN UPDATES**

Major updating of the plan should occur every five years. These updates will ensure renewal and continued usefulness of the plan for use by City officials, staff and others. Annual plan amendments from the previous four years should be incorporated into the next major plan update. Plan updates will be a significant undertaking involving City officials, City departments and citizens. Consultant services may be utilized if necessary.

As a part of major plan updates, the City should review and update the base data including population projections and





existing land use. Additionally, the goals, objectives and policies of the plan should be analyzed and reviewed to determine their effectiveness and relevance to current conditions. Goals, objectives and policies that were not previously achieved due to obstacles should be identified, and new or modified goals, objectives and policies should be developed as necessary based on new data, revisions to the anticipated time frame, specificity of objectives and actions, and identification of appropriate implementation agencies.

The result of a major plan update will be a new plan for the City, including identification of up-to-date goals, objectives, policies and implementation actions.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN**

The essence of the plan is in the City's ability to implement its goals, objectives and actions through tools like subdivision regulations, zoning ordinance and coordination with entities such as ODOT or the Shawnee Chamber of Commerce. In a continually changing environment, enforcement is a necessary action not only to preserve the character and integrity of established neighborhoods and nonresidential areas, but also to ensure sustainable quality development in the future.

Perhaps the most important method of implementing the plan comes through a day-to-day commitment by elected and appointed officials, City staff, and citizens of the community. The plan must be perceived as a useful and capable tool in directing the City's future. Plan elements and maps should be displayed and available for ready reference by public officials, City staff, business and property owners, and citizens. It is this high visibility that will make the plan successful, dynamic and a powerful tool for guiding Shawnee's future growth and development.

Plan implementation activities should include the following:

- ◆ Future Land Use Plan – Implementation will include use of the Future Land Use Plan and polices in decision-making relating to zoning and subdivision approvals, to ensure that development and redevelopment are consistent with the City's plan. The plan should be used to identify appropriate areas for development based on land use compatibility, infrastructure availability and environmental constraints. Additionally it should be used to direct residential and nonresidential growth in appropriate areas.
- ◆ Thoroughfare Plan – The Thoroughfare Plan should be used in subdivision plat review and dedication of needed rights-of-way for street and highway improvements.

- ◆ Existing Regulations – Existing regulations and ordinances, including the zoning and subdivision ordinances, should be reviewed and updated to reflect the policies identified in the plan.
- ◆ Economic Development – Policies and strategies identified in the plan should serve as a basis for providing economic incentives and enhancing economic development opportunities in the City. Land use policies should be used in encouraging industrial and commercial development in appropriate and compatible areas.
- ◆ Private Property Owners/Developers – Private property owners and developers should utilize the plan in identifying appropriate areas for development, based on natural constraints, land use compatibility, and upgrading of transportation facilities and public utilities. The plan should be used by local leaders in encouraging development that is compatible with the policies identified in the plan.
- ◆ Elected Officials and Staff – The City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission and City staff should constantly use the plan in guiding decisions regarding subdivision changes/revisions and in implementing the zoning ordinance. The plan should continually be referenced in planning studies and zoning case reports as well as informal discussion situations. Proposals for new development should be consistent with the policies outlined in the Comprehensive Plan.

## 2005 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Strategic Plan is the final, essential step in the comprehensive planning process. The Strategic Plan is a “checklist” of action statements that represent those items considered to be the most critical “next steps.” The Strategic Implementation Plan was developed following coordination between the City Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission. This initial plan of action is designed to “kick start” implementation activities by the City and other public and private partners by addressing those projects that can be immediately undertaken or are so pressing as to require immediate action.

The Strategic Plan is meant to evolve. Each year, actions that have been accomplished should be removed from the list, perhaps to be placed in a new list highlighting the “successes” of the Comprehensive Plan. New actions should be placed into the Strategic Plan so that continuous effort is taken toward meeting the vision established in the Comprehensive Plan. This process is among the various tasks that can be undertaken by an





Implementation Task Force for submission to the City Commission.

During February 2005, a joint workshop between the City Commissioners and members of the Planning & Zoning Commission determined that the following plan-related items should be addressed during 2005:

## **RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

**Task 1:** Conduct a housing market analysis to determine appropriate markets for infill activity.

- ◆ Provide recommendations regarding price markets, alternative housing markets appropriate to Shawnee, and target locations.

**Task 2:** Examine best practices throughout the country to determine if they are applicable for use in Shawnee including infill incentives, development techniques and other methods that improve capacity.

**Task 3:** Revise Ordinances to reflect proposed changes in the Comprehensive Plan, including those that promote or remove barriers to infill development.

- ◆ Incorporate alternative housing types such as granny flats, row houses and multiple family homes in new development and existing neighborhoods.
- ◆ Provide density incentives to developers that are willing to incorporate alternative housing types into a new development.
- ◆ Promote alternative site design including zero-lot line development, reduced setbacks, reduced street widths, reduced lot size, mixed use development, cluster housing, and increased density.

**Task 4:** Conduct one or more forums between participants in infill development to discuss and promote infill development.

- ◆ Participants should include the City of Shawnee, area builders, lenders, and developers.
- ◆ Educate builders, developers and the general public regarding the benefits of a diversified housing stock.
- ◆ Discuss low interest loans and grant programs as a means to entice residents to invest in downtown mixed use activities that include residential units.
- ◆ Discuss the concept of annual rental registration requirement for all housing structures that will at least partially be available for lease. Registration should require an inspection of facilities prior to issuance of a permit.

**Task 5:** Identify and profile vacant or underdeveloped sites throughout Shawnee as candidates for infill development.

- ◆ Designate specific sites for immediate marketing and development.
- ◆ Establish priority and use for other sites through neighborhood and district action plans.
- ◆ Continue demolition of substandard and dilapidated housing with emphasis on the potential infill development and removal of structures along "identity" corridors.

## IMAGE

**Task 1:** Develop an enhancement plan for corridors in Shawnee.

- ◆ Incorporate visual features in the streetscape to allow for implementation over time, beginning with sites that will have significant visual impact.
- ◆ Establish design and aesthetic improvements along specific streets to be placed into capital improvement projects as they occur.
- ◆ Coordinate street furniture, street lights, street trees and other items of the streetscape to ensure an efficient and appealing image, including deviations as needed to enhance individual character districts.

**Task 2:** Establish gateway points into the City of Shawnee, particularly upon entrance into the community along I-40.

- ◆ Coordinate with ODOT to ensure that required parameters are met.

**Task 3:** Develop a unique, themed wayfinding system throughout Shawnee.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

**Task 1:** Appoint a task force or committee comprised of the City of Shawnee, the sovereign tribal nations, Pottawatomie County, and other parties for discussion of issues of mutual interest.

- ◆ Establish a liaison to represent the City of Shawnee
- ◆ Potential issues of interest to initiate discussion:
  - Fire and Police Service issues, including local small area radio waves
  - Capacity and coordination of water and sewer use
  - Shared consensus on growth patterns, uses and techniques
  - Transportation Plan
  - Common image and themes for the area

**Task 2:** Coordinate enhancement plans with other parties that have an interest in a well maintained and managed Shawnee.





- ◆ Potential entities include the City of Shawnee, the chamber of commerce, the Shawnee Economic Development Foundation, and the Convention & Visitors Bureau
- ◆ Coordinate with ODOT in discussions regarding transportation, streetscape and beautification.

## TRANSPORTATION

**Task 1:** Develop a phased plan of pedestrian oriented improvements throughout Shawnee.

- ◆ Perform an assessment of current conditions of sidewalks and prioritize improvements by connectivity and level of use.
- ◆ Evaluate and propose improvements including, pedestrian crosswalks, signage, school zones, handicap ramps, curb cuts, and pedestrian timings at signalized intersections, such as Kickapoo & MacArthur, Union & MacArthur, and Union & Highland Streets.
- ◆ Establish new sidewalk standards designed to improve pedestrian activity, including classification, materials, treatments, width, offset distance from roadway, continuity, location of crosswalks, ramps.

**Task 2:** Explore alternative solutions to the current configuration of Kickapoo Street from MacArthur Street south.

- ◆ Incorporate access management principles from I-40 south to Main Street.

## GROWTH

**Task 1:** Initiate a series of Neighborhood and District Action Plans to improve and protect Shawnee neighborhoods and character districts.

- ◆ Identify neighborhoods throughout Shawnee and determine a number of plans to be completed annually.
- ◆ Determine methods for funding or otherwise implementing improvements determined by neighborhood and district plans.

**Task 2:** Discuss a program for developing neighborhood and district organizations to ensure input and equal representation such homeowner or property owner associations.

- ◆ Establish programs that local organizations can assist with that will improve the quality of life in neighborhoods, such as Crime Watch, neighborhood clean-up, assistance with code enforcement, programs for seniors and youth, and maintenance of public spaces and recreation areas.



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