



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.

