

Appendix C: Summary of Findings and Recommendations from 2003 2002 Updates to the 1996 Comprehensive Plan

I. Excerpts from "Key Findings" and "Key Recommendations" Listed in the 2003 Update to the 1996 Arkansas City Comprehensive Plan

a. Key Findings:

- i.** Although this study indicates that Arkansas City has steadily lost small percentages of its population since 1970, a thorough analysis suggests that the loss is actually due to a shift in migration and living patterns over the past 30 years. In short, a small, but cumulatively significant, number of persons have either chosen to relocate or initially settle in one of several townships that surround Arkansas City.
- ii.** Future potential of a local area is highly predicated on the expected population performance of its region. Various State and university projections were consulted in developing the forecasts in this Comprehensive plan. Specifically, the Arkansas City and Winfield regions [cities plus townships], Cowley County, and the South Central Kansas Region are expected to grow at or above the mean of the State of Kansas and United States although the recent weakness in the aircraft manufacturing sector since 9/11 may negatively affect this projection.
- iii.** Median family and median household incomes in Arkansas City are both below the State's mean. In all probability this is due to a shift of higher incomes to the rural townships surrounding the city. This will very likely have a negative impact in the future on total personal income and the real value of property. This can only be offset by new residential development within the city limits or through annexation.
- iv.** Arkansas City's future income and wealth potential, in terms of real 1992 dollars, must be described as average to poor. The shrinkage of agricultural and natural resources related income continues to impact the local economy. Although there is real growth in technological and related professional incomes, this is apparently being offset by the shift to service sector jobs.
- v.** In 2000, over 82 percent of the housing units were single-family units; 60 percent were owner-occupied; and, the median value of an owner-occupied home was \$32,800.
- vi.** 35 percent of the housing units in Arkansas City were built in 1939 or earlier, which clearly points out the need for maintaining the existing housing stock and keeping older neighborhoods healthy.
- vii.** USD 470 enrollment declined steadily from 1996 to 2000 with an aggregate loss of 300 students or 8% of the total enrollment in 1995. This loss of enrollment was principally caused by the loss of jobs in the county in the early 1990s and especially the closure of the Total Petroleum refinery in 1996. In 2001 however, this trend reversed with the addition of 150 new students. This is a direct result of the new packing plant in Goff Industrial Park which opened in August 2001, closed in 2002 and reopened in May 2003. This trend is supported by USD 470's major school renovation and expansion program in the late 1990s which refurbished all elementary and secondary schools with major additions to several elementary schools, the middle school and high school. The growth trend in school enrollments is expected to continue with another 200 students being added over the next 5 years.
- viii.** Arkansas City has about 320 acres of city-wide parks, which converts to about 30 acres per 1000 population. This compares favorably with national park standards.

- ix.** The sanitary sewer treatment plant was upgraded in 1982 to meet EPA effluent standards for secondary treatment plants. In 2001 the plant was further upgraded to meet new EPA standards for disinfection and maintaining treatment during high river flows. The plant is capable of treating an average of 3.9 million gallons per day (MGD) with peak flow capacity at 4.6 MGD. The 2001 average daily influent flow was 1.89 MGD.
- x.** In 1997 a new lift station and force main was constructed for new residential development in the vicinity of Country Club Road and Kansas Avenue. This is the first time in 30 years sanitary sewers have been extended east of the Walnut River which will allow higher density development in this area.
- xi.** In 2000 the City installed 10,000 feet of new sanitary sewer interceptor line in the southwest quadrant of the community. This substantially improved the infiltration/inflow problems that the City's sewer collection system had been experiencing although more work remains to be done on this issue.
- xii.** The water treatment plant began operation in 1974 with a design capacity to process 7.5 million gallons of well water per day. Modifications were introduced to the plant in 1979 to allow water from the Walnut River to be piped to the plant. When the plant stopped processing water from the Walnut River in 1992 the KDHE capacity rating of the plant returned to 7.1 MGD.
- xiii.** The two most environmentally sound areas for urban expansion are the areas north and northwest of Arkansas City, and the areas between the Walnut River floodplain and C-4 school.
- xiv.** The residential neighborhoods situated in the floodplains of the Arkansas and Walnut Rivers are expected to experience serious decline over the next 20 years, but forces causing decline can be significantly offset by removal of the flood plain regulations, active code enforcement, redevelopment incentives and maintenance of streets and infrastructure.
- xv.** The construction of the levee and the southern loop of the Highway 77 bypass may stimulate "spontaneous rehabilitation" on South Summit. However, the social and economic composition of the area, and the vitality of the real estate market in the neighborhood, may limit the recovery. The City should stimulate reinvestment in the neighborhood.
- xvi.** The Sleeth neighborhood appears to have reached a state of equilibrium, indicating the area is not expected to experience a dramatic turn around. Revitalization should be emphasized to maintain the existing supply of affordable housing and prevent further decline and deterioration of housing.
- xvii.** Rural housing development in the urban fringe is expected to continue. Arkansas City should take steps to ensure that rural housing is coordinated with the service capacity of the area. Uncoordinated development, inadequate roads and storm water drainage, and failing lateral fields will eventually pose health and safety problems. The result will be intervention with public tax dollars, expensive and undercapitalized benefit districts, and higher property taxes.
- xviii.** The large-lot housing developed next to 8th Street and 15th Street will present the City with challenges. These tracts may deter interest in development because of the varied ownership pattern. As a result, small (5-10) acre subdivisions may occur when the existing landowners decide to sell. This will require the City to coordinate these small subdivisions to ensure a unified network of storm drainage, utilities and roads.

b. Key Recommendations:

- i.** Investigate the group aged 55-65 for retirement patterns. Determine why there is an out-migration trend. Develop plan of action to retain and attract early retired households.
- ii.** Study and monitor the trend of higher income families migrating to Bolton and Creswell Townships. Develop strategy and capitalize on opportunities to increase future, high value development within the City boundaries.
- iii.** Vertical integration of existing manufacturers and focusing clusters of related manufacturing, educational, and research could very well yield increased economic development activities in the Arkansas City area.
- iv.** Continue to support and enhance economic development initiatives and partnerships to expand employment of existing business and industries as well as attracting new businesses and industry to the County.
- v.** The City should continue its systematic program of code enforcement on dangerous structures, debris, trash, weeds, unsightly outdoor storage and abandoned vehicles. The program should work to eliminate blighted conditions that discourage upkeep and investment in older neighborhoods. The program should expand to include some level of inspection of rental property to maintain the safety and sanitation of rental property.
- vi.** An assessment of the City zoning and subdivision regulations should be performed to evaluate the regulatory impact on the cost of housing and development. The codes should also ensure good site design when mixing commercial with or near residential or introducing higher density housing in a low-density area.
- vii.** The City should establish a policy on the placement of mobile homes (non-residentially designed manufactured housing) in neighborhoods of site-built homes. The policy should encourage manufactured housing for infill and redevelopment purposes in older neighborhoods.
- viii.** The City should encourage the use of tax rebates to property owners renovating property in designated older neighborhoods and identified revitalization areas.
- ix.** The City should support the proper management of the Arkansas and Walnut River basins on a regional level to insure protection of the community water supply.
- x.** The Downtown of Arkansas City should remain the focal point of the physical fabric of the community. Policies and action plans should be encouraged to:
 - 1.** Preserve the historic buildings and architectural character.
 - 2.** Improve the sense of place in Downtown by enhancing the building facades, streetscape, and landscaping. Incorporate a pedestrian plaza to create a focal point for community activities.
 - 3.** Build upon and improve the business and physical relationship between Downtown and Cowley County Community College.
 - 4.** Improve the pedestrian, vehicular and visual connections between Downtown and outlying neighborhoods.
 - 5.** Encourage the creative re-use of existing building space in the downtown area.
- xi.** A partnership between the public and private sectors should be established to provide leadership and direction on how Arkansas City is going to compete and prosper in the 21st century. Many of the issues, constraints, ideas, and programs identified with this plan rely on

cooperation between the public and private interests. Arkansas City needs to recognize that economic development and community development are not mutually exclusive. It is important to understand that the strength of the community lies in its small-town atmosphere, sense of security and livability coupled with good school facilities and programs and vital business and industrial employers.

II. Excerpts from "City of Arkansas City 2002 Comprehensive Plan Summary"

- a. 2002 Comprehensive Plan Mission: To assemble data on the status and history of Arkansas City and to establish a vision, policies and goals to help guide public and private decisions that will affect the community's future quality of life.**

CITY OF ARKANSAS CITY 2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUMMARY				
PLAN SUBJECT	GOALS	KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	KEY POLICIES
POPULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and increase population. • Maintain a vital mix of age groups. • Maintain healthy mix of income groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of population from 14,262 in 1960 to 11,963 in 2000, may in large part be the result of a migration of upper- and middle-income families to Creswell and Bolton Townships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to study migration of population of City from unincorporated areas in Bolton and Creswell Townships. • Focus on getting new development inside the city and annexing adjacent developed areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage diverse socio-economic population. • Continue support of ED partnerships. • Maintain and add housing stock.
LOCAL ECONOMY		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal income has grown at the same rate as the US average (6.1%), but approximately 13% lower than the Kansas average. • Median and family household incomes are below the state's mean due to a shift of higher incomes to rural townships surrounding the City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mainstay of growth for the economy for the past 30 years has been manufacturing. This is one of two areas that the City should focus on for continued support of the economy. • Continue to support economic development initiatives, partnerships, and the basic resources for economic development, which include training and education via CCCC, vital downtown, joint industrial parks, essential medical care, safe and convenient transportation, and an adequate labor pool. 	

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HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a good supply of quality, owner occupied & rental housing for all income groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% of all housing units in Arkansas City were built in 1939 or earlier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the age of the City’s housing stock, the City must work hard to maintain the quality of the existing housing stock & keep older neighborhoods safe, healthy & suitable for a private investment in housing maintenance & improvements. • Self-contained housing designed specifically for the needs & lifestyle of older retired citizens & singles interested in secure, maintenance-free living environment should be explored. • The residential neighborhoods south of Madison Avenue & Sleeth neighborhoods should be targeted as revitalization areas. • City should prepare an inventory of infill lots in older areas & consider an urban homesteading incentive program. • Encourage neighborhood action plans & the development of self-help programs. • Maintain a continuous systematic program of code enforcement including property maintenance codes & nuisance codes. • Expand use of tax increment financing for especially difficult neighborhood problems. • Consider City initiation of agency for acquiring & improving local housing for special target groups such as the handicapped or low- & moderate-income persons & families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage more use of NRD tax incentive & infill of vacant lots in older areas. • Eliminate deteriorated, dangerous or hazardous structures. • Complete new levees & reduce flood plain zoning areas. • Discourage piecemeal development of scattered residential & nonagricultural property on the urban fringe. • Preserve rural areas. • Improve neighborhood Infrastructure. • Continue a systematic street improvement program. • Preserve, maintain local brick streets wherever possible.

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PLAN SUBJECT	GOALS	KEY FINDINGS	KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	KEY POLICIES
COMMUNITY FACILITIES, UTILITIES AND AMENITIES			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete phase 2 bypass project for better residential/commercial access to south and west and to remove most trucks from interior of city. • Develop a new hospital facility. • Complete new countywide humane shelter. • Expand development of community greenway park system along levee alignment. • Improve walkways and bike trails on Summit Ave. • Preserve historic downtown buildings. • Repair and extend sidewalk system in city. • Continue upgrade of interior stormwater system. • Continue work to upgrade downtown streetscape. • Support expand program to pave and upgrade streets. • Continue to enhance public art displays including murals, statuary and architectural displays. 	
FUTURE LAND USE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprawling rural residential land uses to east and west have been enabled by rural water districts and lack of land use controls. • Several areas of community have been developed piecemeal fashion which may inhibit higher quality development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus upper medium income and multifamily housing with full services to the northwest development area. • Encourage rural residential development to locate in land use development areas. • Discourage new commercial development on west Kansas. • Encourage expansion of Goff Industrial area to the north. • Discourage incompatible spot zoning. 	
TRANSPORTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide for safe and convenient access for all types of transportation. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete phase 2 southeast bypass. • Work to design southwest quadrant of bypass. 	

