

CHAPTER SEVEN

Implementation

This chapter provides a road map of necessary steps to implement the provisions outlined in the Shawnee County Comprehensive Plan.

IMPLEMENTATION

Adoption of the Comprehensive Plan is just the beginning. It is absolutely necessary to examine the tools available to implement the comprehensive plan once it has been adopted. Traditionally, there are three tools available to do this, including:

- Land Division Regulations, including plat exemptions and subdivision and platting,
- Zoning Regulations
- Capital Improvements Programming

Given the large number of political and taxing jurisdictions within Shawnee County, the plan also recommends strengthening Intergovernmental Cooperation efforts. In some instances, it may be advantageous to execute interlocal agreements to clarify expectations and roles and responsibilities.

Finally, plans need champions. County officials need to use the plan as a reference tool when making decisions.

A plan implementation matrix has been developed to help guide initial plan implementation steps.

GENERAL LAND USE REGULATIONS

One of the primary purposes of the Comprehensive Plan is to provide recommendations for regulations to guide future land use decisions in the unincorporated areas of Shawnee County. Some of the land use recommendations proposed in this plan document diverge from the regulations currently in effect in Shawnee County. Following approval of the Comprehensive Plan, Shawnee County should undertake a formal review of its zoning and subdivision regulations and make changes as necessary to assist with plan implementation.

As mentioned in previous chapters, 46,552 people currently live in unincorporated Shawnee County. This is 3 ½ times more than is expected based on comparisons with similar Kansas counties (i.e. Douglas, Johnson, Riley, and Sedgwick Counties). This large population has had dramatic impacts:

- **Loss of Agricultural Lands.** The loss of nearly 30,000 acres (45.7 square miles) of agricultural lands to very low-density residential development since 1960 has undoubtedly reduced the economic output of this important industry in Shawnee County. There is a community interest in protecting the remaining agricultural lands for future generations. Roughly 8% of the total land area of Shawnee County has been converted from productive agricultural lands to very low-density residential development. This exurban development costs county taxpayers more to provide public services.
- **Disruption of Agricultural Operations.** As more families that are not engaged in agriculture continue to move into unincorporated areas in Shawnee County, the potential for conflicts between agricultural operations and new residential property-owners increases. This includes the introduction of commuter traffic onto roads designed for agricultural land uses. It also

includes a noticeable increase in noxious weeds as homeowners are typically less familiar with rural property maintenance standards.

- **Unrealistic Expectations for Public Services.** As families move from cities into the unincorporated areas in Shawnee County, they bring with them an unrealistic set of expectations about the types and levels of services Shawnee County should provide for their new homes. Counties are not cities and are not equipped to provide the same types of public services at the same service standards as cities. As more residential development occurs in unincorporated Shawnee County, public agency budgets are strained.

Rural lifestyles are attractive to many people. Because of this, more families will move in to unincorporated areas of Shawnee County. Steps need to be taken to ensure that new residential development occurs in a responsible manner. This means that development not occur in environmentally fragile areas (i.e., floodplains, wetlands and steep slopes) or on the most productive agricultural lands. Finally, it means that appropriate public services at appropriate service levels be in place before development occurs. For this reason, Shawnee County should carefully consider the best approach for strengthening land use regulations throughout the entire unincorporated area.

Topeka ETJ and UGA

Currently, The City of Topeka has sole responsibility for land division approvals in the entire Topeka Extraterritorial Jurisdiction (ETJ), including the Urban Growth Area (UGA). Figure 7.1 on page 150 shows the UGA and ETJ.

Topeka has recently established relatively strict standards for new land divisions in the UGA. Because the UGA is the area adjacent to the current corporate limits of Topeka and because this is the area that Topeka plans to annex within the next 20 years, Shawnee County should support Topeka's efforts and approach to regulate growth and development inside the UGA. Shawnee County should work closely with Topeka to strengthen the standards for new land divisions in the non-UGA portion of the ETJ as well. There are several approaches that could be used alone or in combination:

- Shawnee County could request the City of Topeka make specific changes to their subdivision ordinance while simultaneously making specific changes to its own zoning ordinance.
- Shawnee County could execute an interlocal agreement with Topeka more carefully delineating land division, land use and land development responsibilities between the city and county. K.S.A. 12-744 and K.S.A. 12-2901 delineate the process for this.
- The Shawnee County Commission could notify the Topeka City Council of its intent to begin exercising land subdivision authority inside the ETJ. This would require the creation of a joint planning commission for the ETJ. K.S.A. 12-750 delineates the process for this.

Regardless of the option chosen, there are several specific land use regulation changes that should be implemented as quickly as practical following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Homes on Agricultural Lands

One primary home should be allowed on every farm or ranch in Shawnee County for the use of the farm or ranch operator. An accessory home occupied by a family member or employee should be allowed on every farm or ranch. This presumes the farm or ranch is large enough to support any required septic systems for the homes.

Existing Parcels of Record

Residential parcels of record recorded with the Shawnee County Register of Deeds prior to adoption of this plan should be allowed to be developed under the development standards that existed at the time the parcel was created. This includes both un-platted tracts created through the "plat exemption process" and platted lots created as part of residential subdivisions through the regular "subdivision and platting process." The only thing that should be required to develop these parcels is a building permit. At this time, 2,228 vacant residential parcels have been identified in the unincorporated area.

Generally, this means that un-platted residential parcels must have:

- A minimum of 3-acres;
- A minimum of either 200-feet or 300-feet of frontage along a public road depending on when and where the tract was created; and
- If 300-feet of frontage is required, then there is also a maximum depth-to-width ratio of 2:1.

The City of Topeka has also agreed that all homes built on residential lots within platted subdivisions that were approved prior to the adoption of Topeka's Land Use and Growth Management Plan will be allowed to connect to Topeka water and sewer utilities. There are approximately 1,000 such platted residential lots in the Half Day Creek area located east of US-75 Highway and north of NW 35th Street.

Existing undeveloped parcels, created prior to June 1, 1992, and not meeting the minimum acreage and frontage requirement may be "grandfathered in" provided at the time of creation it became an independent stand-alone parcel and not held in common ownership with other contiguous parcels. The only thing that is required to develop these parcels is a building permit.

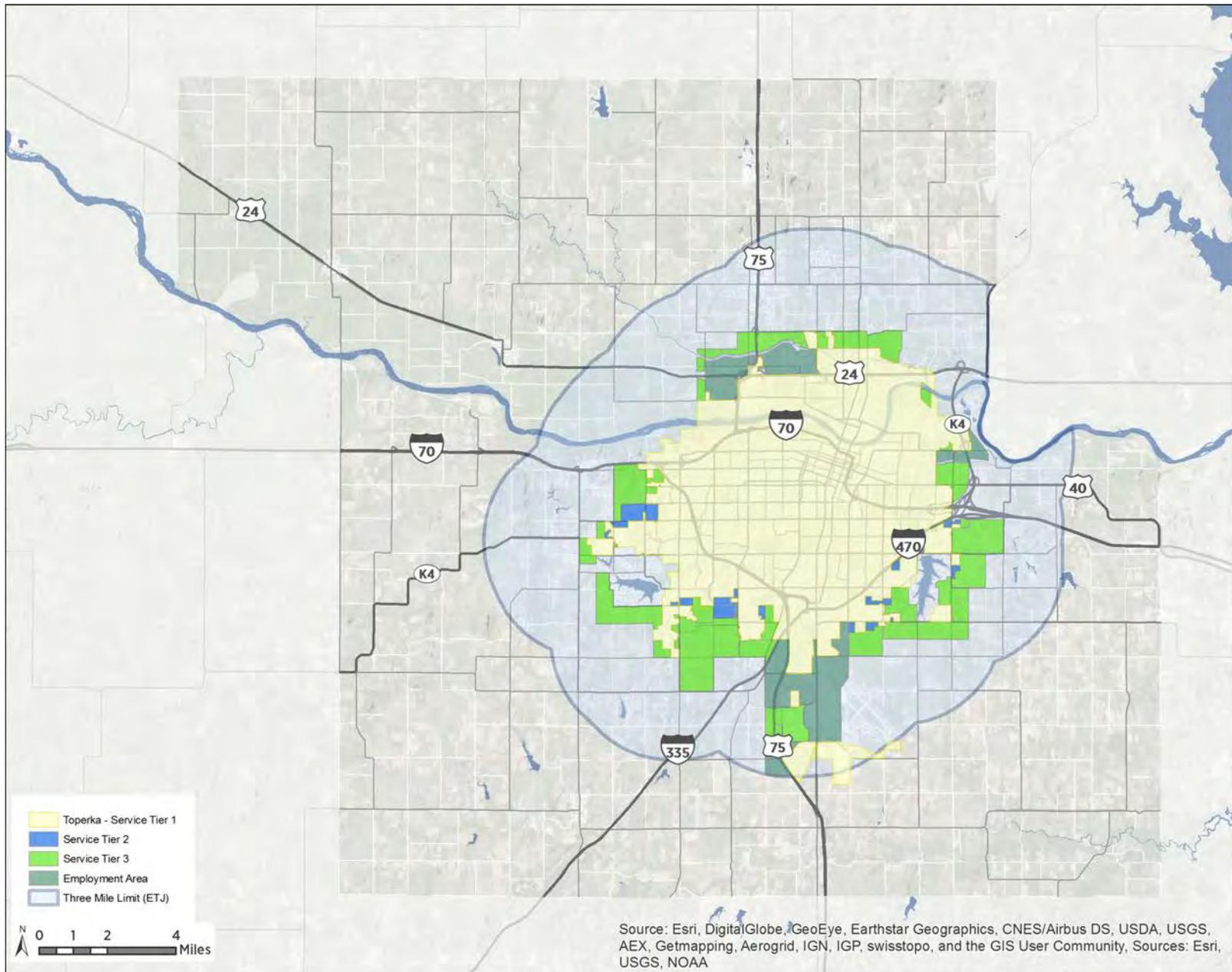


FIGURE 7.1: Topeka ETJ, UGA, and Service Tier Boundaries

Source: Shawnee County GIS Data

Plat Exemptions

Plat exemptions have been allowed in Shawnee County for decades, and have resulted in the creation of un-platted tracts of land along most public roadways in and throughout unincorporated Shawnee County. As described in an earlier chapter, the resulting “parcelization” of the unincorporated area is not desirable for many reasons. Plat exemptions should rarely be used for non-agricultural land divisions, Shawnee County should carefully consider the desirability of allowing plat exemptions in certain locations for residential land divisions

Recently, the City of Topeka has increased the minimum frontage requirement for plat exemptions to 300-feet and created a tract depth to width ratio of no more than 2:1 in the non-UGA portion of the ETJ.

In all areas, Plat exemptions should be prohibited for the following:

- Commercial and industrial land divisions;
- Environmentally fragile locations, including but not limited to: floodplains, designated wetlands, and areas with steep slopes;
- Locations that are economically valuable for commerce. This would include but not be limited to freeway interchange service areas.

AGRICULTURAL AREAS

Figure 7.2 shows the Future Land Use map for Shawnee County.

- Plat exemptions should be allowed for all agricultural land divisions and agricultural land assemblies.
- Subsequent proposed changes from agricultural uses to residential, commercial or industrial uses should require platting before either building permits and occupancy permits are issued by Shawnee County.
- Plat exemptions should be limited for residential land divisions in the Exclusive Agricultural Use Area and the Agricultural Conservation Areas. New residential plat exemptions should only be allowed in these areas when the following requirements are met:
 - Each farm or ranch existing prior to adoption of this plan should be allowed to create one new residential tract through the plat exemption process, and these new residential tracts will be at least 3-acres in size.
 - The new residential tract should have adequate facilities and services, including:
 - **Frontage and Access.** New parcels should have 200 feet of frontage along public roads. The required frontage and access may be along section-line roads.
 - **Fire Protection.** No requirements should be established regarding fire response times or proximity to the nearest fire hydrant as measured along public roads.
 - **Drinking Water.** New parcels may use either privately-owned wells or water from a public water supply such as a rural water district. Rural water service is preferred and should be used if available.
 - **Wastewater Collection and Treatment.** Subject to any required soil percolation testing and permitting requirements, new parcels may use privately-owned septic systems.

URBAN - RURAL TRANSITION AREA

The Urban-Rural Transition Area is located between the City of Topeka and agricultural areas. As a transitional zone, there will be large agricultural parcels and operations in addition to single-family housing development. A key goal for Shawnee County is to preserve agricultural land while Topeka desires to direct urban and suburban development toward Topeka. A shared goal for the city and county is to promote responsible development.

- Plat exemptions should be allowed for all agricultural land divisions and assemblies.
- Each farm or ranch existing prior to the adoption of this plan should be allowed to create one new residential tract through the plat exemption process, and these new residential tracts will be at least 3-acres in size and a maximum depth-to-width ratio of 2:1.
- All proposed changes from agricultural land uses to commercial or industrial land uses should require platting before building and occupancy permits are issued by Shawnee County.
- Plat exemptions for new residential land should only be allowed when the following requirements for adequate facilities and services are met:
 - **Frontage and Access.** New parcels must have 300 feet of frontage along existing public roadways.
 - **Fire Protection.** New parcels should be located within an 8-minute response time from nearest fire station. New parcels should be located within 1,000 feet of the nearest fire hydrant as measured along public roads.
 - **Public Drinking Water Supply.** New parcels must connect to public water suppliers. New parcels will not be allowed to use privately-owned wells for drinking water.
 - **Wastewater Collection and Treatment.** Subject to any required soil percolation testing and permitting requirements, new parcels may use privately-owned septic systems.

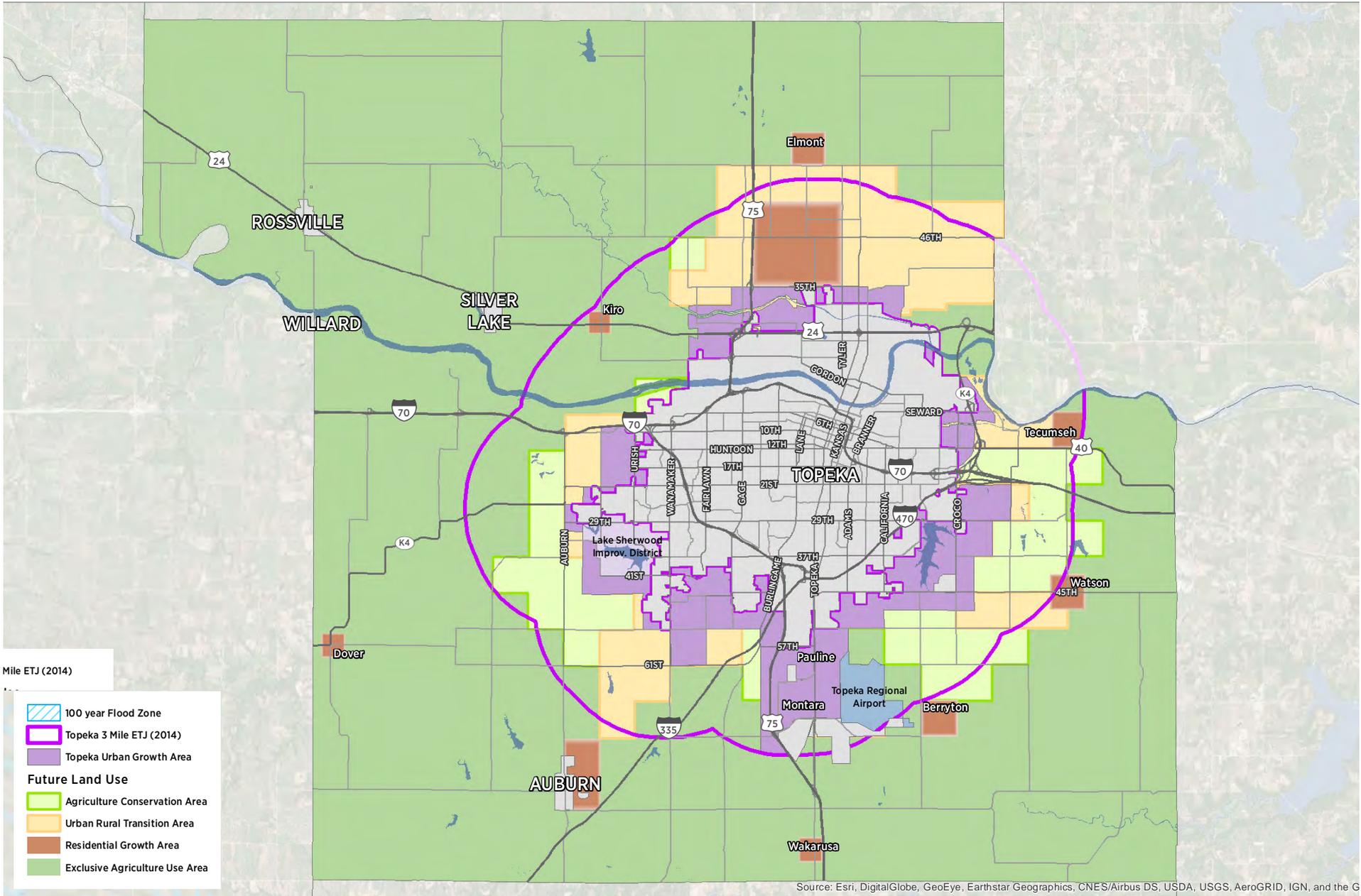


FIGURE 7.2: Future Land Use Map

Subdivision and Platting

The formal subdivision and platting process should be followed for most non-agricultural land divisions, particularly in the designated growth areas.

GROWTH AREAS

Shawnee County should encourage new residential and commercial development to locate in designated growth areas, including Auburn, the existing unincorporated towns like Berryton, Dover, Elmont, Kiro, Tecumseh, Wakarusa, and Watson, and the Half Day Creek area. This will help Shawnee County reach its key goals including preserving agricultural land, protecting agricultural operations, and protecting rural lifestyles, while also supporting the goals of the five cities.

- The City of Topeka’s subdivision and platting regulations should be followed in the UGA. The City of Auburn’s subdivision and platting regulations should be followed in the Auburn Residential Growth Area.
- To protect rural lifestyles and to promote responsible development in rural areas, formal subdivision and platting should be required for developments proposed in all residential growth areas.
- Responsible development includes clustering development in a manner that complements the existing pattern of development in these areas. This is particularly important in the unincorporated towns as each has a unique character.
 - Community facilities, such as schools, churches, post offices, and retail shops are encouraged to locate at the key intersection in the growth areas with the entrance to the facilities facing the street. Setbacks should be minimal. Off-street parking should be located to the rear of the lot when possible.
 - Single-family residential development is encouraged to locate behind the community facilities. Thus, frontage along section-line roads is discouraged, but not prohibited.
- In unincorporated towns, consider the size and layout of lots and blocks, street width and configuration, and other design characteristics compatible with these rural townsites. Consider allowing accessory residential units on the second floor above commercial shops and on single-family lots, but these should be located above detached garages, in detached cottages, or in basements. Accessory residential units should have their own entrance and their own kitchen and bathroom facilities.
- In the Half Day Creek Growth Area, consider how best to develop the interior of sections of land, rather than just along the section line roads.
- Responsible development includes providing adequate public facilities and services.
 - **Frontage and Access.** New parcels must have frontage along and access to public roads.
 - **Fire Protection.** New parcels should be located within an 8-minute response time from nearest fire station. New parcels should be located within 1,000 feet of the nearest fire hydrant as measured along public roads.
 - **Public Drinking Water Supply.** New parcels should be located within the service area of public water suppliers, and should be required to connect to those suppliers. New parcels should not be allowed to use privately-owned wells for drinking water.
 - **Wastewater Collection and Treatment.** As development proposals occur, Shawnee County should work with developers and the existing residents of unincorporated towns to establish publicly-owned and operated packaged treatment sewage lagoons for the treatment of wastewater for the entire unincorporated town. This does not necessarily mean that Shawnee County would own or operate the wastewater lagoon and sanitary sewers; those responsibilities could be taken on by another political jurisdiction or entity.



Unincorporated towns have their own character: Wakarusa (top) and Berryton (bottom)

Zoning

Farming and ranching should continue to be the most important land use in the unincorporated area of Shawnee County. Given the importance of agricultural income to the local economy, Shawnee County should take steps to protect farms and ranches for future generations. This includes preventing loss of agricultural lands to residential, commercial and industrial development. This also includes preventing the disruption of agricultural operations from incompatible residential, commercial and industrial land uses.

EXCLUSIVE AGRICULTURAL USE AREAS

To protect the most important agricultural lands from development, Shawnee County should establish the strictest requirements for development in this area.

- Farming and ranching operations should continue to be the dominant land uses in exclusive agricultural use areas. These areas could also include agritourism and limited home occupations. Agritourism and home occupations should be reviewed for traffic and other impacts prior to development.
- Additional land uses should be permitted upon review. This would include businesses that support the agricultural industry, solid waste disposal, and mineral extraction. Truck stops may be considered near freeway interchanges on I-70 west of Topeka. Performance standards should be established in the county's development regulations.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION AREAS

Shawnee County should establish clear expectations as to the desired types of land uses inside Agricultural Conservation Areas.

- Farming and ranching operations should continue to be the primary land uses in these areas. Limited home occupations should be allowed, including agritourism occupations. Agritourism and home

occupations should be reviewed for traffic and other impacts prior to development.

- Because of the proximity of these areas to Topeka, it is likely that exurban development will continue.
- Heavy commercial and industrial land uses should be prohibited. Instead, they should occur inside the Employment Tier portion of the UGA or in the cities

RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREAS

To promote responsible growth and development in the unincorporated area, Shawnee County should establish development expectations, particularly regarding the types of public services that need to be in place prior to development.

- Shawnee County should encourage residential development to occur near the well-established and important unincorporated towns of Berryton, Dover, Elmont, Kiro, Tecumseh, Wakarusa, and Watson. The creation of a "village" overlay zoning district would be a logical approach. Zoning for these townsites should allow a reasonable mix of residential, neighborhood commercial, and other community-based land uses. Community-based land uses would also include schools, churches, post offices and community parks.
- Shawnee County should encourage residential development in the Half-Day Creek Residential Growth Area. However, this area should largely be developed after the Topeka UGA. Neighborhood commercial development in this area should be directed to the area east of US-75 along NW 46th Street.
- Heavy commercial and industrial land uses should be prohibited. Instead these should occur inside the Employment Tier of the UGA or in the cities.

URBAN-RURAL TRANSITION AREAS

To promote responsible growth and development in the unincorporated area, Shawnee County should allow development expectations, particularly regarding the types of public services that need to be in place prior to development.

- Agricultural uses are anticipated to decline in this area over time as exurban residential development continues.
- Residential development on 3-acre un-platted tracts are anticipated to be the major type of development activity in this area.
- All commercial and industrial land uses should be prohibited in this area.

Capital Improvements Programming

One of the most critical tools available to counties in implementing their comprehensive plan is the development and use of a multi-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP). Typically, a CIP is a schedule of projects the county will initiate within 5 or 6 years. The first year of the CIP includes projects that are funded as part of the county's annual capital budget. Projects are typically divided up into several phases, including: preliminary engineering, right-of-way or easement acquisition, utility relocation, and project construction. Small projects may be completed in just one year. Large projects may take more than one year to complete in which case individual project phases may be listed in the CIP.

One of the major challenges for counties is that much of the public infrastructure serving residents of unincorporated areas in counties is not under the direct control of the various county departments. Shawnee County itself is not responsible for providing water, wastewater, storm drainage, fire protection and other public services to its residents. But, there are special purpose units of local government that do provide many of these services in the unincorporated area.

The Shawnee County Public Works Department is responsible for the construction and maintenance of major roadways and bridges in the unincorporated area. The Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance and operation of all locally owned parks in both Topeka and Shawnee County. Capital expenditures for both major roadways and parks facilities should be included in the county's CIP.

Because Topeka is an urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000 people, federal law requires the region to establish a metropolitan planning organization (MPO). One of the requirements of all MPOs is that a transportation improvement program (TIP) be established that schedules all federally funded surface transportation projects and all regionally significant projects for which funds have been identified. Like a CIP, the TIP includes 5 or 6 years of scheduled projects. Shawnee County should coordinate the development of the county CIP closely with the development of the TIP by the Metropolitan Topeka Planning Organization (MTPO).

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

There are 51 different governmental jurisdictions located inside Shawnee County. With the exception of the five incorporated cities (i.e., Auburn, Rossville, Silver Lake, Topeka, and Willard) and Shawnee County itself, most of these local jurisdictions provide just one public service to county residents based on well-defined geographic areas. The highly specialized services offered by many of these jurisdictions makes it possible to act independently from one another. But, there are benefits to cooperation. Among these are:

- **Early Identification of Issues.** Sharing information early with other local jurisdictions makes it much easier to identify and resolve issues early.
- **Resolution of Complex Issues.** By communicating actions and working cooperatively with other local jurisdictions, local jurisdictions can address and resolve issues that are more complex than can be addressed by working independently.
- **Cost Savings.** Cooperation can save money by increasing efficiency and avoiding unnecessary duplication of efforts.
- **Consistency and Predictability.** Cooperation can lead to consistency of the goals, objectives, plans, policies, and actions among jurisdictions. Cooperation also can provide greater predictability to residents, developers, businesses, and others.
- **Understanding and Trust.** As local jurisdictions communicate and collaborate on issues of mutual interest, they become aware of each other's needs and priorities. They can better anticipate problems and work to address problems as they arise. Cooperation can lead to positive experiences and results that build trust among jurisdictions.
- **Service to Citizens.** The biggest beneficiaries of intergovernmental cooperation are citizens for

whom the various local government jurisdictions were created. County residents may not understand, or even care, about the intricacies of a particular intergovernmental issue, but all Shawnee County residents appreciate their benefits, such as cost savings, provision of needed services, a healthy environment, and a strong economy.

- **Avoid Expensive and Costly Litigation.** The alternative to interlocal cooperation is to settle differences between jurisdictions in court. This can be both time consuming and costly.
- The simplest way to improve cooperation is for local jurisdictions to regularly communicate with each other. Communication between local jurisdictions can be conducted both formally and informally.

Informal communications. One informal opportunity for local jurisdictions to improve lines of communications is by committing to talk to each other on a regular basis about issues that are known to be of concern to both. These informal opportunities should occur frequently. But, conversations need only last long enough to address the issue at hand. Such communications could be over the phone, at a project site, or even over lunch. Each local jurisdiction should commit to making outreach efforts to other local jurisdictions. Because of busy schedules, this is hard to get started, but once it does the benefits become obvious.

Formal Meetings. Intergovernmental meetings provide a more formal opportunity to outline the broader community vision and specific mutual interests, issues and concerns. There are two ways to organize formal meetings.

- The first way to organize intergovernmental meetings is to have all local jurisdictions within a given location, such as a quadrant of the county, meet to discuss topics relevant to that portion of Shawnee County.

- The second way to organize intergovernmental meetings is to have a single type of local jurisdiction meet to discuss best practices, sharing of resources, and other topics specific to that type of service provider.

Interlocal Agreements. Interlocal agreements offer a framework for enhanced cooperation and joint delivery of services. K.S.A. 12-2904 establishes the legal framework for entering in to such agreements. Basically, any power, privilege or authority an individual public agency exercises or is capable of exercising may be delivered jointly by any two or more public agencies.

Given the complexity of land development regulations within the 3-mile ETJ, it would be particularly beneficial for the City of Topeka and Shawnee County to consider how an interlocal agreement might benefit both jurisdictions.

- Topeka is responsible for land divisions, including both formal platted subdivisions and plat exemptions within the 3-mile ETJ. This includes vacating existing plats.
- Topeka owns, operates and maintains some infrastructure within the 3-mile ETJ. Topeka also sells water to some rural districts providing services within the 3-mile ETJ. Topeka has the ability to establish policies regarding the infrastructure it directly or indirectly controls.
- Shawnee County is responsible for zoning administration and issuing building permits within the 3-mile ETJ.

Comprehensive Plan. This comprehensive plan is an invaluable tool that should be used by all local government jurisdictions in Shawnee County. For the goals of this comprehensive plan to be realized, it is critical that all local governmental jurisdictions use the comprehensive plan as a basis for decisions they are making about the services they provide within Shawnee County.

PLAN MAINTENANCE

This plan is not intended to be a static document. It is a set of guiding principles and policies, based on the current needs of Shawnee County and its residents and reasonable future projections thereof. While the recommendations and policies proposed are based on a 20-year forecast into the future, this plan will be most effective when used as the basis for actions in more nimble, finite increments. Therefore, the county should implement an ongoing planning process that uses this plan to develop more detailed year-to-year improvement schedules. Additionally, as industries, development patterns, economies, and public needs change over time, so too must this plan evolve. As such, a part of the ongoing planning process should include an annual evaluation of the plan as it relates to development and infrastructure events of the past year.

Annual Plan Evaluation

This process should include an annual evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan policies and procedures. This evaluation should occur at the end of each calendar year. Ideally, this evaluation should culminate in a written report prepared by the County Planning Director that:

- Summarizes key land use developments and decisions of the past year and relates them to the Comprehensive Plan.
- Reviews actions taken by the county to implement plan recommendations during the past year.
- Defines any changes that should be made to the Comprehensive Plan.

Annual Action Program

Both the Planning Commission and County Commission should use the comprehensive plan to define the annual work programs of policies, actions, and capital investments. This annual process should be completed before the beginning of each budget year and should include a specific work program for the upcoming year. This program should be specific and relate to the county's projected financial resources. The work program should establish the specific plan recommendations that the county will accomplish during the coming year.

GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents implementation an implementation matrix for each subject chapter. The matrix presents the goals and actions in an organized way, along with potential stakeholders, the type of activity, the timeframe or timing of the activity, and the tool(s) that should be used to implement this goal.

Below, the general implementation matrix also notes important first steps to begin the process through setting up or calibrating the traditional tools for implementation.

- A list of all major land developments that occurred in the unincorporated area of Shawnee County and relate those developments back to the comprehensive plan;
- A list of all plan implementation steps taken during the previous year; and,
- A list of all changes or modifications to the comprehensive plan that should be made

GENERAL - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX						
GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
PI-1: Shawnee County should update its zoning and subdivision regulations.	1	Shawnee County should update its zoning and subdivision regulations to align them with the policies and priorities established in the comprehensive plan.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Shawnee County should work closely with Topeka to more effectively manage growth and development in the Topeka ETJ. The goal should be to require responsible development while protecting both agricultural lands and fragile areas (i.e., floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, and critical wildlife habitat).	Action	SNCO Planning, COT Planning	Ongoing	Cooperation
PI-2: Shawnee County should create a formal Capital Improvements Program.	1	Shawnee County should review options for creating a more formal capital improvements program to assist with plan implementation.	Policy	SNCO Planning and SNCO PW	Short (By 2020)	CIP
	2	The Shawnee County Planning Commission should begin reviewing capital improvements by all units of governments for consistency with the comprehensive plan as allowed under the provisions of K.S.A. 12-748.	Policy/Action	SNCO Planning, School Districts, Townships, Rural Water Districts, etc	Medium (By 2025)	CIP, Cooperation
PI-3: Shawnee County should take a lead role in promoting intergovernmental cooperation.	1	Define working relationships with other local jurisdictions that provide infrastructure and other services to determine how best to cooperate with each other, how to establish policy that overlaps from one jurisdiction to another, and how best to coordinate the review of development proposals and projects.	Action	SNCO Planning, School Districts, Townships, Rural Water Districts, etc	Ongoing	Cooperation
PI-4: Shawnee County should annually review and periodically update the comprehensive plan.	1	The County Planning Director should annually prepare a report for submission to both the County Planning Commission and County Commission.	Action	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Research

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
NR-1: Discourage development on fragile lands	1	Ensure a level of review either by developers or staff to prevent development from encroaching on steep slopes, wetlands, or floodplains. This could also potentially apply to native prairie. Review could be a strict prohibition, a discouraged activity, or a points-based system which evaluates overall impact.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Sub Regs
	2	Utilize the Environmental Constraints map throughout the development process and work through any necessary mitigation on a case-by-case basis	Action	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Sub Regs
	3	Evaluate the need to update the County policy regarding rezoning, subdivision, and environmental regulations	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning, Sub Regs
NR-2: Encourage the protection of lands with positive environmental features	1	Identify types of lands suitable for park development, in accordance with the Shawnee County Park Master Plan; balance parks throughout the county, utilize watersheds, expand existing parks, or add parks in natural/wildlife hotspots such as native prairies.	Policy	SNCO Planning, SNCO Parks & Rec	Medium (By 2025)	Zoning, Sub Regs, Cooperation
	2	Utilize scenic linear areas such as rivers and floodplains for trail development. The Parks Master Plan sets a goal of 150 miles of trails, including a north/south trail across I-70 and the Kansas River.	Policy/Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO Parks & Rec	Long (By 2037)	Zoning, Cooperation
	3	Look to history, regional trails, and agritourism to find areas which need to be protected for future opportunities; encourage the use of incentives preserving and enhancing those resources.	Action	SNCO Planning, Historic Preservation, Tourism, Ag Stakeholders	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, Incentives
	4	Work with mineral extraction companies to protect suitable areas from development; as sand pits and similar businesses exhaust their resources, convert them into recreation and wildlife areas.	Action	SNCO Planning, Mineral Extraction Stakeholders	Ongoing	Zoning, Cooperation
NR-3: Focus growth away from predominantly agricultural areas	1	Identify valuable farm and ranch land and discourage non-agricultural uses in these areas.	Action/Policy	SNCO Planning, Ag Stakeholders	Short (By 2020)	Zoning
	2	Preserve the rural landscapes by focusing development near existing development clusters. This should include clustering the development of rural unincorporated towns in a consistent manner	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
NR-4: Better coordinate potential environmental effects	1	Require coordination of water retention and drainage where multiple dwelling units are within a certain distance of each other	Policy	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW	Short (By 2020)	Cooperation, Sub Regs
	2	Work with other jurisdictions and with other branches of Shawnee County including the Shawnee County Health Agency and Shawnee County Parks & Recreation to evaluate how planning and planning regulations can help improve their missions.	Action	SNCO Planning, Cities, SNCO Health, SNCO Parks & Rec	Ongoing	Cooperation

TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
TI-1: Prioritize the maintenance of existing infrastructure.	1	Ensure that all facilities owned or managed by the county have at the minimum adequate maintenance to prevent the deterioration of services.	Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW	Ongoing	CIP, Cooperation
	2	Prevent the overutilization of infrastructure that is used for purposes other than was intended when they were created (moving from a farm-to-table road to a local residential commuter road). This will prevent unforeseen wear and tear on properties.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Sub Regs, Zoning
	1	Consider the lifecycle costs to the public of infrastructure such as its initial construction, maintenance and replacement costs. Plan and review developments accordingly and regularly budget for major maintenance and replacement costs.	Policy	SNCO PW, SNCO Planning	Ongoing	CIP, Policy
TI-2: Ensure fiscally responsible administration of infrastructure investments.	2	Utilize existing infrastructure to its full potential. This includes filling in spotty and partially developed areas, hooking new development into existing infrastructure to reduce the burden on taxpayers, and generally focusing development to available infrastructure with adequate capacity. Special attention should be paid to areas with existing underutilized infrastructure.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Long (By 2037)	CIP, Long Range Plans
	3	Grow incrementally based on ability to provide infrastructure and in places where infrastructure is already expanded, promote development; do not construct new infrastructure to service leapfrog development. Plan and coordinate transportation facilities, infrastructure improvements, and development with cities to provide seamless and unified service. This includes working with other taxing jurisdictions to identify locations where development will likely happen and how to most efficiently provide them service. Ensure that other decision-making bodies are also planning and considering their direct and indirect impacts.	Policy/Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW	Ongoing	Sub Regs, Zoning
	4	Consider adopting a full Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), approved by Planning Commission, to address issues of certainty when developers are trying to coordinate service providers.	Policy	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, CIP, Long Range Plans
	5		Policy	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW	Short (By 2020)	CIP
	1	Follow the recommendations of the Topeka Regional Transportation Plan.	Capital	SNCO Planning, MTPO	Long (By 2037)	Cooperation
TI-3: Improve mobility and access throughout the county for all modes of transportation.	2	Promote the development of an active transportation system of trails and sidewalks to improve the mobility of groups that do not drive	Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO Parks & Rec	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, CIP
	3	Consider the role of transit in unincorporated Shawnee County, both within the county and to surrounding communities.	Capital	TMTA, SNCO	Short (By 2020)	Cooperation
	4	A new interchange has been discussed in the county near Auburn on I-335 (i.e., the Kansas Turnpike). However, Auburn Road must be upgraded to handle the traffic first for this project to advance, and the exit must generate new traffic per KTA's policy and the costs will be extensive. These costs make an additional interchange in this area seem unlikely through at least 2031 when the county half cent sales tax will be reconsidered.	Capital	SNCO PW, KDOT, KTA	Long (By 2037)	Long Range Plans, CIP
	1	Require land development to have adequately provided infrastructure.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Sub Regs
TI-4: Coordinate planning and service provision.	2	Coordinate with other taxing jurisdictions to encourage the fullest use of existing transportation infrastructure.	Action	Taxing Jurisdictions	Ongoing	Cooperation
	3	Ensure cooperation between cities and Shawnee County to support planned infrastructure improvements long term.	Action	SNCO and Cities	Ongoing	Cooperation
	4	Encourage the MPTO to expand its boundaries to again include all of Shawnee County	Policy	SNCO and MPTO	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation
	5	Further discussion between Shawnee County and Topeka is needed regarding utilization of the existing Half Day Creek Sewer Interceptor.	Action	SNCO Commission, COT Council	Short (By 2020)	Cooperation
	1	Look at ways to support business development through infrastructure investment, including telecommunications infrastructure.	Capital	JEDO, COT Chamber	Ongoing	Cooperation, CIP
TI-5: Use infrastructure investments to enhance the quality of life, develop the economy, and increase safety.	2	Work with Shawnee County Parks and Recreation to develop a county-wide system of trails that connects into regional trail systems including the Flint Hills Nature Trail.	Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO Parks & Rec	Long (By 2037)	Cooperation, CIP
	3	Increase safety by exploring new ways to help law enforcement effectively patrol the county.	Action/Capital	SNCO Sheriff	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, CIP
	4	Develop a roadway system that can help reduce accidents on the roads for motorists, including turn lanes on highly traveled roadways.	Capital	SNCO PW	Ongoing	Long Range Plans, CIP
	5	Consider transportation, utility and public service requirements in any future updates to Shawnee County's development regulations (i.e., zoning and subdivision)	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Policy

LAND USE AND DESIGN - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
LU-1: Limit industrial development to the most suitable locations.	1	Most industrial development, except for mineral extraction and solid waste disposal, should be directed to the cities or the employment tier of the Topeka UGA.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Industrial development could be considered elsewhere in the unincorporated area when proposed on sites adjacent to established industrial areas. The new development should be compatible with the intensity and scale of existing industry on adjacent industrial sites.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	3	Mineral extraction and solid waste disposal should be allowed in the unincorporated area upon review.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Long (By 2037)	Zoning, Sub Regs
	4	All industrial development in the unincorporated area should be subject to site development and performance standards established in the county's development regulations.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
LU-2: Encourage responsible rural commercial development.	1	Home occupations should be allowed in the unincorporated area.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning
	2	Commercial development that supports the agricultural industry should be allowed in the unincorporated area. Agribusinesses in the unincorporated area should be directed to the five cities and to the Small-Town Growth Areas.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	3	Neighborhood commercial development that supports the rural population should be allowed in the unincorporated area. These uses should be encouraged to locate in the Small-Town Residential Growth Areas and the existing commercial development at Hunter's Ridge located at US-75 and NW 46th Street.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Zoning, Sub Regs
	4	Heavy commercial development (i.e., big box stores, regional shopping centers, etc.) should be directed to the cities and the employment tier of the Topeka UGA.	Policy	SNCO Planning, COT, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	5	All commercial development in the unincorporated area should be subject to site development and performance standards established in the county's development regulations.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
LU-3: Encourage responsible residential development.	1	The county should encourage new residential development to occur on these existing parcels of record before supporting new land divisions.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Policy
	2	New residential development in the Auburn Growth Area should be annexed into the city as a condition of development. Auburn does not exercise extraterritorial jurisdiction.	Policy	City of Auburn, Private Sector, SNCO	Ongoing	Cooperation
	3	New residential development in the Small-Town Growth Areas should be compatible with and complement existing development.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	4	New residential development in the Urban-Rural Transition Area should be compatible with existing development in its vicinity. It is anticipated that new development will be at exurban densities due to the lack of public wastewater service in these areas.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	5	The Half-Day Creek Growth Area is established as an urban reserve for future suburban development after the Topeka UGA is substantially developed. Due to the investment in the Half-Day Creek sewer interceptor line, this area should be reserved for future residential development at suburban densities.	Policy	SNCO Planning, COT, Private Sector	Long (By 2037)	Zoning, Sub Regs
	6	Shawnee County should support the goals established by Topeka for the UGA because these are the areas most likely to be annexed by Topeka.	Policy	SNCO, COT	Long (By 2037)	Cooperation
	7	New residential development should be discouraged in the Exclusive Agricultural Use Area and the Agricultural Conservation Area, with exceptions as laid out in Chapter 4.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
LU-4: Protect the farms, ranches, and rural scenic landscapes for future generations.	1	Residential development should be limited in Exclusive Agricultural Areas and Agricultural Conservation Areas to what is necessary to support the agricultural industry.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Agritourism should be allowed only after public review in Exclusive Agricultural Areas and Agricultural Conservation Areas. Agritourism should be subject to site development and performance standards established in the county's development regulations. Primary consideration should be given to traffic impacts and noise impacts.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	3	Mineral extraction should be allowed only after public review in Exclusive Agricultural Areas and Agricultural Conservation Areas.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Mineral Extraction Stakeholders	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
H-1: Encourage adequate development to allow for the growth of Shawnee County.	1	Work with developers to identify ways to streamline administrative process for development while maintaining adequate oversight of the development process by both Shawnee County and the City of Topeka.	Action	SNCO, JEDO, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Educate landowners about how their land can be used or developed and streamline processes to do so.	Action	SNCO, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Outreach
	3	Promote the development of a variety of housing types, both in terms of tenure and in terms of price-point.	Action	SNCO, JEDO, Private Sector	Long (By 2037)	Cooperation, Zoning, Sub Regs
H-2: Ensure adequate methods of construction and development to protect the health, safety, and welfare of county residents.	1	Adopt a building code program with sufficient enforcement to protect the health, safety, and welfare of county residents.	Policy/Capital	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	CIP
	2	Encourage a high standard of development through fire and other necessary inspections.	Policy	SNCO	Ongoing	Building Regs
H-3: Guide development to areas suitable for that style of development with appropriate densities to support public services.	1	Update the zoning code to better reflect the current development pattern of the county and to guide urban, suburban, exurban, rural, and village development to appropriate locations.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning
	2	Update the zoning code to preserve areas unsuitable for residential development, including prime farmland, floodplains, and other natural areas.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning
	3	Set expectations for new residents to understand what service levels they may expect moving to different areas of the county.	Action	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Outreach
	4	Work with the City of Topeka to identify suitable areas within Topeka's ETJ that could still allow future development.	Policy	SNCO Planning, COT Planning	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation
H-4: Develop a range of housing options, especially those that are affordable for low income and those that cater to higher income households.	1	Work with developers to identify barriers to housing development in price ranges that are currently lacking in the county and determine methods that can help overcome those barriers.	Action	SNCO Planning, COT, Private Sector	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation, Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Identify grant or partnership opportunities for housing development that would help fill needs within Shawnee County.	Action	SNCO Planning, JEDO, COT	Ongoing	Cooperation, Research
	3	Encourage the continued development of market rate units by private developers.	Action	SNCO	Ongoing	Cooperation
	4	Explore how accessory dwelling units could fit into Shawnee County's broader housing market.	Action	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Research
H-5: Create quality neighborhoods to facilitate a high standard of living for homes in urban, suburban, exurban, and rural areas, including unincorporated towns.	1	Try to facilitate the construction of neighborhoods through the development process. Update the development code (zoning and subdivision ordinances) to encourage neighborhood-oriented development.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning, Sub Regs
	2	Use existing focal points such as employment centers, schools, parks, or commercial areas to create neighborhoods with amenities that will promote a high quality of life.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Sector	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	3	Update the development code (zoning and subdivision ordinances) to encourage neighborhood-oriented development in suburban areas, possibly through density incentives to help offset those costs.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning, Sub Regs
H-6: Identify and preserve areas for development of parks and open space.	1	Work with residential developers and the Shawnee County Parks and Recreation Department to create trails, parks and other amenities for the benefit of neighborhoods and the Shawnee County Public.	Action/Capital	SNCO Planning, SNCO Parks & Rec, Private Sector	Long (by 2037)	Cooperation, CIP
	2	Preserve the rural landscapes by focusing development near existing development clusters. This should include clustering the development of rural unincorporated villages in a consistent manner.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs

3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL	#	ACTIVITY	TYPE	GROUPS	TIMING	TOOL
ED-1: Train and educate a highly-qualified workforce for new and existing jobs within the county.	1	Cultivate homegrown talent to continually enhance the workforce by connecting individuals in the community to training and employment opportunities for in-demand positions.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, Chamber, USDs, Higher Ed	Ongoing	Cooperation
	2	Encourage partnerships between educational institutions and businesses to help fill in the cradle-to-career pipeline that groups like JEDO and GO Topeka have begun to create.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, SNCO, USDs, Higher Ed	Ongoing	Cooperation
	3	Attract new workers to live in Shawnee County through unified positive marketing of the county and its sub-areas.	Action/Capital	JEDO, GO Topeka, SNCO, COT	Medium (By 2025)	Outreach, Cooperation
ED-2: Encourage entrepreneurship and the development and growth of small businesses.	1	Strengthen support for entrepreneurs and small businesses, helping increase their likelihood of success and nurturing business development from the ground up.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka	Ongoing	Outreach, Cooperation
	2	Promote available incentives to small businesses that may not be aware of existing opportunities.	Action	SNCO, COT	Short (By 2020)	Outreach, CIP
	3	Support businesses that are maturing to ensure that they have access to the workforce and capital needed to expand within Shawnee County.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, Chamber	Ongoing	Outreach, Cooperation
	4	Evaluate current regulations regarding home-based occupations in unincorporated county to balance the compatibility of land uses, carrying capacity of infrastructure, and economic growth.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Short (By 2020)	Zoning, Sub Regs
ED-3: Build on the economic strengths of the County using available opportunities.	1	Market existing incentives for unincorporated areas in Shawnee County that build on the county's strengths, ensuring that funds provided align with benefits.	Action	SNCO, COT	Ongoing	Outreach, CIP
	2	Encourage the attraction of jobs related to Shawnee County's strengths, including advanced systems technology, food manufacturing, logistics and distribution, and professional and financial services. Focus on well-paying jobs that can improve the quality of life for Shawnee County residents.	Action/Capital	JEDO, GO Topeka, Chamber	Ongoing	Outreach, CIP
ED-4: Promote tourism using natural, historic, and cultural characteristics and protect resources like sand and limestone for mineral extraction.	1	Support the development of agricultural tourism by providing for uses which help promote and maintain local farming operations and rural heritage and character.	Action	SNCO Planning, Ag Stakeholders	Ongoing	Cooperation
	2	Market natural, historic, and cultural resources as opportunities to develop viable businesses, including focuses on the history of trails, Kansas statehood, civil rights, and environment. This should complement efforts by the Native Stone Scenic Byway and the Oregon Trail Park.	Action	SNCO, COT, Hist Soc, Arts Stakeholders, KDOT	Ongoing	Outreach, Cooperation
	3	Protect rural scenic landscapes, particularly those that support tourism and recreation opportunities.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Ag Stakeholders	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
	4	Explore the feasibility of designating an Oregon and California Trail Scenic Byway capitalizing on the area's rich history. Utilize the new park that is being constructed on Topeka's Riverfront to further this project.	Action	SNCO, Cities, Uninc Towns, KDOT	Medium (By 2025)	Research
ED-5: Constantly improve quality of life to attract and retain businesses and workers, including adequate retail activity to serve residents throughout the county.	1	Find ways to attract employees within Shawnee County to live within the County.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, Private Business, SNCO, COT	Ongoing	Research
	2	Focus on improving quality of life, including schools, quality of development, commercial and cultural offers, and other such factors that help attract and retain businesses and workers.	Action/Policy/Capital	SNCO, COT, USDs, Arts Stakeholders, etc	Long (By 2037)	Cooperation, CIP, Zoning, Sub Regs
	3	Encourage the development of neighborhood commercial establishments near residents in the county that are not adequately served.	Policy	SNCO Planning, Private Business	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs, Cooperation
	4	Ensure that the impacts of businesses on their neighbors are considered, including the parking and noise effects of semi-trucks.	Policy	SNCO Planning	Ongoing	Zoning, Sub Regs
ED-6: Coordinate economic development between all jurisdictions and areas of the county.	1	Work with JEDO, GO Topeka, and other economic development stakeholders to provide a consistent marketing to those living inside and outside of the county.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, SNCO	Ongoing	Cooperation, Outreach
	2	Ensure that organizations involved in transportation, infrastructure, and services for the county are aligned with regards to their plans for enhancement, maintenance, and replacement of infrastructure.	Action	SNCO Planning, SNCO PW, Townships, KDOT, RWDs, COT	Medium (By 2025)	Cooperation
	3	Support the implementation of the Topeka-Shawnee County Holistic Economic Development Strategy, especially those organizations that help to implement the plan.	Action	JEDO, GO Topeka, Heartland Visioning, SNCO	Short (By 2020)	Cooperation, CIP