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City of McPherson, Kansas and Planning Area
Comprehensive Development Plan
2015-2023
Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Development Plan is the major planning tool for the City of McPherson and Planning Area. The Plan considers not only the current city area, but also an area surrounding the city with a high probability of some development within the Planning Period. The Plan takes an in-depth view of the economy as well as the condition and extent of existing and proposed infrastructure, present and future land uses and their area delineations, and current building and land use trends in those areas. In addition, the goals, plans, needs, and desires of many different groups and agencies within the Planning Area are brought together in an attempt to generate the clearest overall view of community needs.

The Plan has been divided into twelve chapters representing specific areas of study. Following is a brief summary of the chapters:

1. **Comprehensive Plan and Regional Influence:** A “comprehensive plan” is legally a guide to planning for a specific area (the “Planning Area”) over a specific time period (2013-2023). Other legal actions and policy decisions involving the local government and other agencies are required for actual implementation of the Plan proposals. This chapter provides a plan overview detailing the purpose of the Plan, the legal basis under which the Plan was developed (Kansas statute), the activity that has gone into plan production, the legal description of the Planning Area (approximately 63 square miles inclusive of the current city boundary), and some of the influences on the Plan determined by its regional or geographical location. Other organizations providing planning or development assistance in this region are also detailed here. Among the potential uses for the Plan are:
 - ◆ A source of information and proposals for public officials, private developers and interested citizens to use in the development of the Planning Area.
 - ◆ A legal basis for the preparation, adoption, and administration of Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.
 - ◆ Assistance in selecting and applying for state and federal grant programs.
2. **Historical Development:** Development of an area depends heavily upon what has happened in and around that area previously. This chapter provides some of the historical background for the region as well as for the specific area that has become the City of McPherson, including the activities leading to its organization on May 28, 1872. Finally, history has a future aspect as well so the chapter also deals with some of the issues inherent in historical preservation. Among the historic structures remaining in the city are the McPherson County Courthouse (1894) and the Opera House (1888) which has recently undergone restoration and is again functioning as a center for entertainment and culture.
3. **Goals for Planning:** Planning may have limited results unless it is done with specific goals in mind. To this end, Chapter 3 attempts to present the various goals of the city in a balanced, overall manner. Some of these goals are very general and others very specific. The means of achieving these goals are the focus of other chapters in the Plan. The categories of these goals are: A) Population; B) Economy; C) Housing; D) Land Use; E)

Transportation; F) Utilities and Storm Drainage; G) Community Facilities; H) General and Infrastructure; and I) Plan Implementation. While the goals cover a wide range of topics, a significant emphasis in this edition of the Plan is the continued development of affordable and workforce housing.

4. **Economy:** Several years of historical information have been compiled to facilitate an analysis of the city's economic health and direction. Local economic information is compared with that of surrounding cities or counties as a means of evaluation. The chapter includes an extensive list of proposed economic policies to ensure that the economy is kept healthy. Among the more significant of the economic characteristics are:

- ◆ The highest proportion of workers in the city are administrative support and clerical (15.8%) followed closely by service occupations (15.3%) and precision production, craft and repair occupations (15.0%).
- ◆ The McPherson Area has an extremely strong and diversified base of commercial and industrial enterprises.

5. **Population:** The plan period has been defined as beginning in 2015, the expiration date of the previous plan, and ending in 2023. Based on this 8-year period, a detailed population analysis was performed to determine the most likely population forecast. Many of the resulting projections in other areas of the Plan were then based on quantities necessary to serve the population goal. Some of the relevant statistics show that:

- ◆ McPherson City has exhibited a slow, but very stable, rate of growth of approximately 5.8% per year since 1970. This compares to a total Kansas State growth rate of 5.6% per year.
- ◆ Both McPherson City and McPherson County showed a slight decrease in population between Census 2000 and Census 2010.
- ◆ Using a compilation of several methods of projection, a city population of **14,588** for the year 2023 has been selected.
- ◆ A significant proportion of the city population (16.5%) falls in the age bracket of 65 years or older. This is a higher percentage than the county as a whole (13.2%) and higher than the state average (13.1%).

6. **Housing:** In recent years, no single issue has arisen as often as that of "affordable or workforce housing". It is interesting to note that this issue was also prominent in the previous comprehensive plan and continues to be a hot topic. The chapter looks at housing issues from many angles including census data and the condition of existing housing. Some significant characteristics are:

- ◆ About 19% of McPherson's houses have residents who have lived there for more than twenty years.

- ◆ The median value of owner-occupied housing units in McPherson is \$117,600.
 - ◆ Housing costs as a percentage of income is over 20% for 49.5% of housing units with a mortgage while it is less than 10% of income for 52.1% of housing units without a mortgage.
 - ◆ 56% of the housing stock in McPherson was constructed between 1970 and the present while 19% of housing stock was constructed prior to 1939.
7. **Physical Development Influences:** Many physical influences affect the when and where of different types of development. Some of these factors are naturally occurring and others are man-made. Covered in this chapter are soil conditions, water resources, topography and drainage, flood hazards, woodlands, parks and other preserves, overall climate, and other features such as airports, industrial districts, etc. In summary, the locations with the greatest potential for near-term development are to the Southeast, North and Northeast. Other locations are available for development but in smaller quantities and, in some cases, at higher expense.
 8. **Land Use Plan:** To determine what may develop in an area, it is necessary to first look at what is already there. Land uses in this chapter have been classified into the categories of: A) Residential; B) Public & Semi-Public; C) Commercial; D) Industrial; E) Transportation (rights-of-way); and F) Vacant and Agricultural. An extensive set of exhibits is available detailing what currently exists within the Planning Area, and what is expected to develop within the Planning Area within the Planning Period. Reliance is made on the engineering feasibility of providing needed infrastructure to serve potential new development. (See chapters 9 & 10 in particular.) State law places some fairly heavy dependence upon this type of planning for consideration in any future cases requesting a change of zoning classification.
 9. **Transportation:** Existing and proposed Functional Street Classifications are analyzed in depth. These classifications detail which streets are to be mainly used for local traffic only and which ones provide for various degrees of heavier traffic loads. Street improvement projects are annually prioritized as a part of the Capital Improvement Program which is a process involving public input. One major project that is currently in the preparation stage is the creation of a second interchange to I-135 to be located at Mohawk Road. Improvements to the pedestrian sidewalk network and bicycle paths are also anticipated with some being completed and others in the planning stage. Alternate means of transportation including railroads, aircraft, and trucking services are also explored. Of special benefit to the city is the newly expanded and modernized McPherson City/County Airport.
 10. **Utilities:** A listing of existing services is included in this chapter along with descriptions of facilities. Extensions to the electric and water distribution systems, sanitary sewer collection system, and stormwater systems are all needed. Sanitary sewer trunk lines to the north and northwest will be the primary improvements needed to make future development possible in these areas. The solid waste utility has recently reopened the McPherson County landfill providing a means of refuse disposal well into the future. Expanded recycling efforts are also being addressed.
 11. **Community Facilities:** Brief descriptions of existing public and semi-public facilities are

included here along with projected needs for future growth of an expanded community. The list of agencies and services covered here is extensive. While each of the services noted areas of future need, some of the major improvements being considered are:

- ◆ The McPherson Police Department will be needing additional space to meet their growing needs.
- ◆ As the city grows to the North, a new satellite fire station will be needed to keep response times low.
- ◆ A new municipal training area is proposed in the southeast part of the city which will accommodate the new Kansas Municipal Utilities training site along with future sites for both the Fire and Police Departments training grounds.

12. **Plan Implementation:** From its beginnings in 1995, this Plan represents a continuous series of studies and improvements undertaken by the City Planning Commission, untold hours of work by various volunteers and city staff personnel, and numerous meetings with various segments of the general public. However, completion of the written document is not the main goal of all of this effort. The Plan simply represents a framework for use in the various planning activities that occur throughout the city and the adjacent portions of McPherson County. If the Plan is to be successful, it must be used continuously by those making planning, development, aesthetic, and fiscal decisions within the community. Some of the “tools” used to implement plan policies are:

Project Review Codes
Economic Development
Capital Improvement Programs
Zoning Regulations
Intergovernmental Cooperation

Environmental & Construction codes
Neighborhood and Project Plans
Annexation
Subdivision Regulations