SHAWNEE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 145-2000

CITY OF TOPEKA ORDINANCE NO. 17522

A JOINT SHAWNEE COUNTY RESOLUTION AND CITY OF TOPEKA ORDINANCE
introduced by Mayor Wagnon pertaining to an amendment to the text and map of
the Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of the County of
Shawnee, Kansas, on this 20th day of July, 2000;

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Topeka, Kansas, on this 11th
day of July, 2000;

Section 1. The Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission
is responsible for preparation of a Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan for the physical
development and redevelopment of the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Area.

Section 2. The Neighborhood Element is a policy framework to guide public
and private investment for the revitalization, stabilization, preservation, development
and redevelopment of neighborhoods throughout the metropolitan area. The
Neighborhood Element sets forth a 25 year vision, goals, policies, and action steps
related to the strategic investment of housing, infrastructure, economic, community, and
recreation resources in a comprehensive manner that recognizes the desire to ensure a
high level of health for all neighborhoods in Topeka-Shawnee County.

Section 3. A cross section of neighborhood stakeholders, represented by a
policy advisory committee and neighborhood based groups, developed, reviewed, and
submitted the Neighborhood Element to the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan
Planning Commission for consideration.
Section 4. Pursuant to Kansas Statutes, the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 24, 2000 and received testimony on the Neighborhood Element as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission voted 14-0-0-0 in favor of recommending the Neighborhood Element as a part of the Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan.

Section 5. The Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan is hereby amended to include the Neighborhood Element as attached per Exhibit A.

Section 6. This resolution/ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage, approval and publication in the official City and County newspaper.

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council

JUL 1, 2000

Joan Wagon, Mayor

ATTEST:

Iris E. Walker, City Clerk

SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS

Theodore D. Ensley, Chair

Marice Kane, Member

Michael Meter, Member
ATTEST:

Cynthia Beck, Clerk
NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT

TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2025

ADOPTED:
Topeka City Council, July 11, 2000
Shawnee County Board of Commissioners, July 20, 2000

Prepared by:
Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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July, 2000
Acknowledgements
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INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS

In 1999, the City of Topeka and Shawnee County asked that the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission update the existing Topeka Shawnee County Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan – 2010 for our region into a new “2025 Plan”. The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range guide for the future physical and economic growth of our region based on the goals and values of the community. The Neighborhood Element is one of many elements - Growth Management, Economic Development, Transportation, Parks and Trails, etc. - that will be developed to comprise the new Comprehensive Plan. The goal of the Neighborhood Element is to establish a policy framework for creating and sustaining livable neighborhoods city-wide through the strategic guidance of public and private resources. The process for creation of the Neighborhood Element included the following steps:

Committee Established (August, 1999) – The Mayor appointed a 20-member citizen policy advisory committee comprised of representatives from neighborhood groups, banks, developers, home builders, community development corporations, realtors, schools, and social service organizations throughout the city. Metro Planning staff prepared a state of the neighborhoods report.

Committee Work Sessions #1 - #4 (August to October, 1999) – The Neighborhood Element Policy Advisory Committee formulated and endorsed draft neighborhood health assessment, vision, goals, policies, and priorities. Metro Planning staff facilitated meetings, prepared a draft document and presentations for focus groups.

Focus Group Meetings (November, 1999) – Seven (7) focus group meetings were held to present the draft Neighborhood Element to neighborhood groups and stakeholders. Each focus group was asked to complete a survey reflecting what they thought were the priority activities for their neighborhood. Over 120 responses were collected to form the basis of the recommended city-wide priority activities as found in Section III of the document. A neighborhood group sponsored each meeting:

- Community Development Advisory Council (11/3/99)
- Southeast Topeka Neighborhoods (Central Highland Park NIA, 11/8/99)
- North Topeka Neighborhoods (No. Topeka on the Move Assoc., 11/8/99)
- Housing and Real Estate Community (Topeka Board of Realtors, 11/9/99)
- West/Southwest Topeka Neighborhoods (McAlister/Parkway NA, 11/17/99)
- East Topeka Neighborhoods (East End NIA, 11/18/00)
- Central Topeka Neighborhoods (TurnAround Team, 11/22/99)

Committee Work Sessions #5 - #8 (December, 1999 to January, 2000) – The Neighborhood Element Policy Advisory Committee considered comments from focus group meetings and discussed actions steps and implementation section in detail. The Committee endorsed final draft for public review.
Public Approval (February to July, 2000) - The draft document was presented to the Planning Policy Committee of the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission and City/County departments for further review. The Planning Policy Committee recommended approval of the document with minor changes and forwarded it to the full Planning Commission for a public hearing on April 24. The Planning Commission made unanimous recommendation of approval to the local governing bodies. The public hearing was noticed to all focus group attendees/invitees, neighborhood groups, and newspaper/media outlets. A copy of the draft document was placed on the City's web page. On July 11, 2000, the Topeka City Council unanimously approved the Neighborhood Element with minor revisions. On July 20, 2000, the Shawnee County Board of Commissioners also unanimously approved the Neighborhood Element making it the first element of the new Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2025.
I. THE STATE OF NEIGHBORHOODS: Neighborhood Health

The image of the successful central business district of the 1970s and 1980s has turned out to be a false measure of urban health. Neighborhoods are the lifeblood of any city.
Witold Rybnizki, "City Life: Urban Expectations in a New World" (1996)

Before implementing any neighborhood development policies, it is essential that we have an understanding of the health of our neighborhoods. We need to take their temperature and blood pressure, perform physicals, and make a diagnosis on symptoms vs. underlying disease (if any) before prescribing a treatment (if any). And once a treatment is prescribed, how will we know if it is doing any good?

Neighborhoods can be analogous to a patient. A neighborhood, like a patient, may need emergency room attention, surgery, out-patient services, or be labeled “at-risk” indicating greater odds they will experience health problems in the future. Meanwhile, before becoming an "at risk" patient, a neighborhood can utilize measures of prevention to lower their risk of needing "medical" attention. All of these situations have different levels of fiscal implications, too. As the old saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Deferring treatment will only make the cost of curing those ailments much higher in the future. Utilizing less costly preventive measures up front will equate to far less costs on society in the future.

Vital Signs
Just as a patient’s temperature and blood pressure are checked as basic indicators of health, “vital signs” can be used as a snapshot of the neighborhood’s current health at a given moment of time. They are a starting point to measure the symptoms a neighborhood may have and to what extent they are occurring. More detailed problem identification is performed during neighborhood planning exercises, but their vital signs give us a basic measure of how we should allocate our resources for treatment much like a triage system.

Maps #1-5 illustrate five (5) vital signs and an overall health composite of our neighborhoods. The health ratings and vital sign measurements do not necessarily correspond to established or known neighborhood boundaries. For now, “neighborhoods” have been defined by Census block group boundaries to make data collection consistent and comparable at a neighborhood-scale. Vital sign measurements are generalizations, or averages, for one or more neighborhoods and do not necessarily depict the precise health for individual blocks within a neighborhood.

Poverty (1990 U.S Census) - High concentrations of poverty have become one of the most reliable indicators of performance in school, crime rates, family fragmentation, job readiness, housing conditions, etc. Neighborhoods with higher concentrations of poverty are generally underserved by commercial services because they are perceived as having less buying power. Map #1 illustrates that relatively few block groups have poverty levels exceeding the City’s average (12.3%) in 1990. The most extreme levels (40%+) occur within the Monroe, East Topeka North, and East Topeka South areas.

July, 2000
Section 1 - State of Neighborhoods: Neighborhood Health
Public Safety (1996-98, Topeka Police Dept.) – Public Safety, as measured by number of Part I crimes reported for the last three years, is a symptom indicating the local environmental conditions conducive to crime and how well a neighborhood is organized to prevent crime from occurring. Areas with business or commercial districts should expect higher crime levels than those areas that are primarily residential neighborhoods. Map #2 illustrates that above average crime levels are concentrated in areas such as Highland Park, Central Topeka, and along I-470. High levels are concentrated in East Topeka North, Hi-Crest, and several neighborhoods in Central Topeka.

Residential Property Values (1998, Shawnee County Appraisers Office) – Property values are in part a reflection of the quality of housing supply and the image of a neighborhood. School choices, perceived safety, protection from more intensive development, etc. can all combine to ultimately affect a household’s decision to buy a house or rent in a given area. Map #3 illustrates that residential property values are highest in areas west of Fairlawn and southeast of KTA/I-335. Low property values are most noticeable in the Historic North Topeka, Hi-Crest and East Topeka North/South areas. The median value of a house purchased in Shawnee County was $79,000 in 1998.

Single Family Housing Tenure (1998 Shawnee County Appraisers Office)
The percentage of homeowners residing in a neighborhood can be an indication of the willingness (or ability) to invest in the area. The most relevant measure of this is how many single-family dwellings are owner-occupied since these homes were built for individual ownership. The percentage of homeowners residing in single-family dwellings will indicate the level of investment confidence in the neighborhood. A simple comparison between percentage of owners vs. renters is not as relevant. Map #4 illustrates housing tenure by Census block group. Block groups with a low percentage of single-family housing have been excluded from the analysis. The central portion of the City exhibits the lowest homeownership levels, including the Holliday Park, Tennessee Town, Old Town, and Chesney Park neighborhood areas.

Boarded Houses (1998-99 Code Compliance Services) - A boarded-up house is a critical symbol for distress in a neighborhood. This drastic step may signal a house is not worthy of rehabilitation by the owner or has become a victim of vagrants and criminals. It is one of the most, if not most, evident physical displays that will undermine confidence in an area for investment and precipitates a downward spiral for the block and/or neighborhood. Of course, it may also ultimately represent a good value for rehabilitation by savvy investors. Map #5 illustrates the number of structures ordered for boarding during 1997-98 by Census block group.

Neighborhood Health (composite map) - Map #6 is a composite ranking of the five previous vital signs for each Census block group. Each vital sign has four rating levels that were assigned points ranging from most desirable condition (4 points) to least desirable condition (1 point). For example, a Census block group that scored in the most desirable level for all vital signs would have received a total score of 20 points.
This total was then averaged (divided by 5) and broken down into the following health classifications as determined by a “natural breaks” statistical method:

- Healthy (3.3 - 4.0 averages)
- Out Patient (2.7 - 3.2 averages)
- At Risk (1.9 - 2.6 averages)
- Intensive Care (1.0 - 1.8 averages)

Healthy neighborhoods are almost exclusively outside the Interstate highways to the west, southwest, southeast, and north. On the other extreme, Intensive Care areas – those neighborhoods that need immediate and substantial attention – are largely concentrated east of SW Washburn Avenue in Central Topeka, within the East Topeka North/South areas, and the Hi-Crest area west of SE Adams Street. Surrounding these areas are At Risk block groups illustrating the need for attention before they succumb to a more serious intensive care classification. Lastly, Out Patient neighborhoods/block groups should exhibit a need for minor isolated treatments, but that are relatively healthy.

Stability Indicators
Whereas “Vital Signs” tell us the current static condition of a neighborhood, “Stability Indicators” will tell us whether or not the condition of a neighborhood is getting better or worse. They detect trends over a period of time related to the desirability of a neighborhood, namely whether people or families are investing in the neighborhood. They are dynamic and measure change.

It is critical to understand where a neighborhood is in its life cycle – an at risk neighborhood may either be on the cusp of improving to out-patient status, maintaining a status quo condition, or dropping faster than a speeding bullet on its way to intensive care status. Depending on where they are on this scale will help determine appropriate treatments and/or how much treatment is needed. The following five indicators have been used to measure an area’s stability (see Table #1 in Appendix for selected neighborhood ratings):

Population Change (1980-90, Census) – Typically, there is no better indicator for the judging the stability of an urban neighborhood than whether or not people are coming or going. A loss in population is a leading indicator of more serious neighborhood social, economic, and physical ills to follow. Since most urban neighborhoods are generally built-out, an increase in population is not expected unless a neighborhood has bottomed-out and has experienced significant in-fill development.

New Residential/Demolition Ratio (1990-97, Development Services and Metro Planning) - This indicator measures how many new residential units were constructed vs. demolished for a neighborhood. Housing unit growth, or lack thereof, closely parallels population change as a basic measure of stability. It will indicate the declining/inclining condition of housing stock and whether or not the housing was replaced.
NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT
TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2025

Median Residential Sale Price (1990-1998, Topeka Board of Realtors) – Actual sale prices are the most compelling indicator for market value and subsequent demand to live in an area. This value is a reflection of all factors that go into making location decisions and is a better indicator of areas undergoing revitalization through rehabilitation of the housing stock. The values have been put into real dollars (i.e., 1998 values) to determine their relative increase or decrease. However, the data is somewhat limited at the neighborhood-level since they are measured at the larger Census Tract levels.

School Attendance Rates (1995/96-1998/99, Unified School Districts) – Healthier neighborhoods should correspond to healthier public schools which is a direct result of participation in school as measured by attendance or drop-out rates. The more stress placed on a child’s learning environment outside the classroom, the greater the odds the school will need to spend more time on issues not related to education. A productive learning environment is a responsibility of the home, neighborhood, and school and attendance rates measure their performance.

School Enrollment (1996-2000, Unified School Districts) – School enrollment figures should generally mirror neighborhood population and have similar meanings – are people leaving or moving into the neighborhood. However, because 1990 Census data for population is somewhat outdated, recent school enrollment figures can be used to forecast population changes during the 1990s and balance out the “population” indicator. School enrollment data is based on elementary school enrollment beginning in 1996 when three new schools (including two magnet) were built and several other schools closed in USD 501.

Revitalization Potential
Assessing a neighborhood’s revitalization potential is another important consideration to make when identifying and targeting areas for revitalization. It should not, however, be the only consideration. Concentrating revitalization efforts only in blighted areas that have significant revitalization potential can result in the diversion of attention away from areas with significant economic, social and physical needs. Still it is important to look beyond existing neighborhood health and stability and examine neighborhood opportunities, assets and strengths. These come in various forms. Some examples include:

Strengths:

• Social relationships within the neighborhood - A neighborhood with strong community ties and the ability to present a “united front” increase the chances of successful revitalization efforts.

• Social/institutional relationships outside the neighborhood

Opportunities:

• Adjacency to stronger and more stable neighborhoods – Opportunities for greater revitalization impact can be found where a severely distressed neighborhood is adjacent to another distinctively healthier neighborhood. Returning market forces to a distressed
and unstable area is made much more feasible when it is “anchored” to a strong and stable source.

- **Vacant Lots** - Vacant lots can present an opportunity for redevelopment. Many of Topeka’s more distressed neighborhoods contain a preponderance of vacant land as dilapidated structures have been razed. These vacant tracts of land often comprise large areas that present opportunities for large-scale redevelopment projects.

- **Significant public/private investment in the neighborhood** - An example is the renovation of the former Union Pacific Depot into the Great Overland Station museum in Historic North Topeka, involving millions of public dollars. A project of that magnitude can create momentum for economic revitalization if the community and local businesses can capitalize on that investment.

**Assets:**

- **Historic Character** - A large number of historically significant structures, particularly if the renovation of some of those structures has already begun, can be a unique neighborhood attribute. This allows a neighborhood to distinguish itself by creating a singular identity that can be used as a tool to market the neighborhood.

- **Intact infrastructure** - Quality infrastructure can significantly increase the attractiveness of an area for new development. The need to repair or construct sidewalks, gutters, storm sewers and streets may inhibit the successful revitalization of an area.

- **Institutional “anchors” (libraries, churches, schools)**

- **Access to public amenities** - Close proximity to schools, parks, public facilities, public transit, employment centers and shopping can create a favorable environment for residential development. The traditional pedestrian oriented design that is found in many older neighborhoods can present an attractive alternative to suburban living.

**Neighborhood Diagnoses**

On the following pages, a neighborhood (or portion thereof) has been selected to illustrate each of the four different types of neighborhood health classifications – **intensive care**, **at risk**, **out patient**, and **healthy**. Each neighborhood profile shows vital signs, stability indicators, revitalization potential, an overall summary of conditions for that particular neighborhood, and a list of remaining neighborhood areas under that health classification. Neighborhood area boundaries are defined by Census block group boundaries and do not necessarily reflect actual boundaries of recognized neighborhoods. Map #7 identifies boundaries of **Intensive Care** and **At Risk** neighborhood areas while Map #8 identifies known neighborhood group boundaries.
Neighborhood Element
Topeka/Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2025

Intensive Care

East Topeka (Abbott/Scott)
Pop. 1,226 (Census Block Groups 11-4, 11-5)

Vital Signs

| Poverty Rate (90): 32% | Population Change (80-90): -14% |
| Median Residential Property Value (98): $12,447 | Median Residential Sale Price Change*(90-98): -22% |
| SF Homeownership (98): 30% | School Attendance Rate Change (97-98): 1% |
| Boarded Houses (97-98): 14 | School Enrollment Change (96-00): -12.5% |

Stability Indicators

Revitalization Potential:
Street infrastructure (curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streets) is in place, albeit in poor condition. Utility infrastructure may need addressing. Is not adjacent to any out-patient areas. A high percentage of vacant lots exist which present redevelopment/infill opportunities. The new Scott Magnet Elementary School may create a stabilizing force in the neighborhood.

Summary of Conditions:
This neighborhood area exhibits very serious distress as evidenced by the high number of demolitions/vacant lots and boarded houses interwoven through the residential blocks. Even with high percentage of single-family homes, less than 1/3 are owner-occupied. Market values for homes have dropped precipitously since 1990. The commercial strip corridor along 6th Street presents a poor image, while population lacks buying power to support neighborhood-serving businesses. Scott Magnet is the type of major investment that could be used as an anchor for future residential development and rehabilitation for homeowners. High percentage of vacant lots near Interstate access could pose major opportunity for redevelopment area.

*in real dollars for Census Tract

Other Intensive Care Neighborhood Areas include:
- Hi-Crest (W)
- Tennessee Town/Holliday Park (N)
- East Topeka (NE)
- Ward-Mead (5th Street)
- Chesney Park
- Monroe/Downtown

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Section 1 - State of Neighborhoods: Neighborhood Health
Historic North Topeka (South)
Pop. 1,034 (Census Block Groups 8-5, 8-6)

Vital Signs
- Poverty Rate (90): 19%
- Crimes Reported Rank (96-98): 3 - below average
- Median Residential Property Value (98): $18,773
- SF Homeownership (98): 37.7%
- Boarded Houses (97-98): 5

Stability Indicators
- Population Change (80-90): -25%
- Median Residential Sale Price Change (90-98): -43%
- School Attendance Rate Change (95-98): -5.5%
- School Enrollment Change (96-00): -4.7%

Revitalization Potential:
Great Overland Station Museum (formerly the Union Pacific Depot) renovation will offer a unique destination anchor for the historic business district upon completion. Many blocks retain homes exhibiting historically significant character. Low-density residential areas still largely intact despite highly intensive zoning. With the exception of a few blocks, street infrastructure (curbs, gutters, sidewalks, streets) is in place. The riverfront presents significant development potential.

Summary of Conditions:
While still an at risk neighborhood, this area is showing signs of accelerating towards an intensive care rating. All stability indicators are alarmingly high indicating the pace of deterioration and population characteristics are changing fast. School issues cannot be ignored. Homeownership rates are hanging on and crime is actually below average. The area has tremendous potential because of its historic character and business district revitalization.

*in real dollars for Census Tract

Other At Risk Neighborhood Areas:
- Central Highland Park
- Holliday Park (S.)
- Old Town
- East Topeka (SE)
- Oakland (Sardou)
- Shorey
- Monroe
**Hi-Crest (East)**
Pop. 1,927 (Census Block Group 30-2)

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<td>Population Change (80-90): +34.7%</td>
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<td>Crimes Reported Rank (96-98): 3 - below average</td>
<td>New Residential / Demolition Ratio: 1.0.6</td>
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<td>Median Residential Property Value (98): $44,397</td>
<td>Median Residential Sale Price Change* (90-98): -2%</td>
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<td>SF Homeownership (98): 68.5%</td>
<td>School Attendance Rate Change (95-98): 0%</td>
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<td>Boarded Houses (97-98): 0</td>
<td>School Enrollment Change (96-00): 15.9%</td>
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**Revitalization Potential:**
Neighborhood contains a grade school and park. Neighborhood lacks sidewalks.

**Summary of Conditions:**
Although generally stable and showing fewer signs of property maintenance neglect, this area is showing some signs of distress particularly in the post-World War II subdivisions. These houses have very small square footage bucking the trend of larger house demands and the lack of sidewalks, alleys, and confusing road patterns do not encourage sense of community or interaction. Contrast with intensive care area to the west of Adams Street.

*In real dollars for Census Tract

Other Out Patient Neighborhood Areas:
- East End
- VA Hospital West
- Quinton Heights - Steele
- Elmhurst
- College Hill
- Oakland
- Jefferson Square
- Kenwood
- Greater Auburndale

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July, 2000
Section I - State of Neighborhoods: Neighborhood Health
Randolph/Collins Park
Pop. 2,172 (Census Block Groups 18-4, 19-1)

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<td>Population Change (80-90): 0%</td>
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<td>Median Residential Property Value (98): $81,450</td>
<td>Median Residential Sale Price Change* (90-98): 10%</td>
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<td>SF Homeownership (98): 82.7%</td>
<td>School Attendance Rate Change (95-98): 0.5%</td>
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<td>Boarded Houses (97-98): 0</td>
<td>School Enrollment Change (96-00): 3.1%</td>
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**Revitalization Potential:**
Neighborhood contains a well-maintained park and elementary school and is surrounded by healthy and outpatient areas.

**Summary of Conditions:**
Very stable and healthy neighborhood area that shows few if any signs of property maintenance problems. Land use is almost exclusively single-family residential. People and children using front yards, walking on sidewalks, and playing in the park.

*in real dollars for Census Tract

Other Healthy Neighborhood Areas:
- Westboro
- Clarion
- McAlister/Parkway
- Avondale West
- Wood Valley
- Gage Park
- Aquarian Acres
Number of Part 1 Crimes Reported 1996-98
(by block group)
- High Number
- Above Average Number
- Below Average
- Low Number

Source: City of Topeka Police Department

City Limits  Kansas River
Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department, 2000

1" = 9,000'
Map # 4
Single-Family Housing Tenure (by Block Group)

% Owner Occupied Housing Units
- 0-33
- 34-49
- 50-69
- 70-100

Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office, 1999

City Limits  Kansas River
Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department, 1999

Areas shown in color have been determined by Shawnee County

1" = 9,000'
Map # 5
Boarded Houses

Boarded Houses 8/98 - 8/99
(by block group)

- 6-10
- 3-5
- 1-2
- 0

Source: City of Topeka Environmental Codes Services Department, 1999

N City Limits  Kansas River

Shaded areas have been determined to have a sufficient neighborhood population and character

1" = 9,000'

Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department, 2000
Map # 6
Neighborhood Health

Neighborhood Composite Rating
(by block group)
- Intensive Care
- At Risk
- Out Patient
- Healthy

City Limits     \^\ Kansas River

Topeka - Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department, 2000

Areas shown in color have been determined to have a sufficient neighborhood population and character
II. The State of Neighborhood Development

When there is order and predictability of public decisions and spending in these areas, the private sector can have confidence in the city and its policies about development.
Alexander Cooper, New York City Battery Park designer (1997)

The Neighborhood Development Dilemma

When it comes to investing or re-investing in any urban neighborhood, there are a number of individual actions and budget decisions made every month by local governmental bodies that act as a de facto policy guide for neighborhood development. They include:

- land use planning/zoning
- economic tax incentives
- capital improvements
- staffing and operations
- code enforcement
- Consolidated Plan budget (CDBG, HOME, ESG)
- school programs
- grant applications

These decisions have the ability to drive private market investment decisions (i.e., household and business locations). For example, a neighborhood zoned for multi-family will generate less “market” demand for homeownership. Urban neighborhoods with no sidewalks, curbs, and gutters or lack of quality school options generate less “market” demand for housing. Without a stable residential and institutional base, desired commercial, social, and infrastructure services are slow to follow if not impossible. When market forces are unbalanced in a neighborhood (i.e., supply far outpaces demand) a whole host of social ills begin to fester – environmental degradation, crime, concentration of poverty, educational malaise, apathy, etc. – and the downward spiral escalates.

But how predictable are these public decisions? How orderly can they be? How can public policy for fiscal and human investment be used to shape desirous futures for a neighborhood and its stakeholders? Recognizing that neighborhoods come in all shapes and sizes, different policies or strategies are needed because of their conditions, character, and values. When these micro-policies are balanced and coordinated with community-wide objectives for the City as a whole, all passengers on the boat move forward at full and deliberate speed.

These development policies tend to be directed at the most “neediest” neighborhoods (as defined for now by percentage of low-moderate income households) which have drawn the
public’s scrutiny over the past 25 years. But how does one define “need”? Are some areas more needy than others are? Is a needs-based approach the most effective way to guide public/private investment? What happens to the other neighborhoods not clearly defined as “needy”? Do we not want to prevent them from becoming distressed?

Many claims have been made over the years to hypothesize why public policy decisions have not had much of a difference for Topeka’s more distressed neighborhoods. And if they have, is there a way to make continual improvements. Below is a discussion of some of the more pervasive issues that have been raised.

Issue #1: Enough Money?

Problem Defined: This claim is often made in reference to the fact that either the City does not receive enough money from HUD to address all the community development needs in the city or there are too many demands for the funding. 1999 Consolidated Plan funding amount totaled $3.7 million. $3.1 million came from entitlement programs (CDBG, HOME, ESG) while the remaining came from program income, reprogrammed funds, and the CIP. While $3.7 million is a large sum by most people’s accounts, the argument can be made that this is not enough to sustain any true revitalization in our most distressed areas of the city.

Yes, it is not enough by itself, but does it have to be by itself? Imagine if a bank saw a major public investment was being committed to a particularly distressed block of a neighborhood involving the rehabilitation of 10 houses. Then the bank decides to commit construction and mortgage financing in the next block to build 20 new houses. Suddenly, the money that once didn’t seem to stretch far enough stretched to the next block. Why? Because the bank felt confident in the direction of the neighborhood, and anticipated a limited risk and economic advantage to investing in the project. In essence, the money spent on rehabilitating 10 houses on one block, leveraged financing for development of another 20 new homes. Leveraging is a key principle of neighborhood revitalization: using money to attract more money. Leveraging three (3) dollars for every entitlement dollar invested is a benchmark that is typically accomplished in other mid-sized cities.

Issue #2: Enough Impact?

Problem Defined: Topeka has received over $50 million in federal community development entitlement programs since the mid-1970s. A persistent claim made is that the impact of that money is not readily observable in the neighborhoods it was meant to help, and that some areas are actually worse off in spite of it. If that is the case, then why?

Maybe one reason can be illustrated from a typical CDBG budget prior to 1998-99. The 1996-97 CDBG budget lists 67 projects (excluding "soft" administration line items) totaling $1,979,719, for an average of $29,548 per project. It should be noted that this calculation includes two housing programs equaling 29% of the budget that if not factored in, would leave an average of $21,900 per project. This alone reveals an enormous amount of line
items that dilute the effectiveness any one project can have. Spending $20,000 - $30,000 is equivalent to one block of new sidewalk, 10 installed decorative street lights, half of a major "gut" rehabilitation for a turn of the century house, 5 houses painted and siding/trim restored, 2 micro-loans for entrepreneurial start-up businesses, and half of new play equipment structure in a park. When the money is devoted to so many small projects, there is bound to be a lack of impact on an area.

On the other hand, having so many projects in a 2-3 block area would have a decided impact. A principle of neighborhood revitalization involves the synergy concept which states: the total is greater than the sum of its parts. For example, imagine on a block of 20 houses that instead of 1 house being rehabilitated, there were 10. What would happen to other 10 houses on the block? The fixed-up 10 houses would stabilize the block sufficiently to cause an increased demand to live there. Once the demand increases, property values will hopefully react to market forces and increase. This allows the owners of the 10 non-rehabilitated properties to invest because they know now that they will be able to recoup monies invested on improvements when they sell the house. In addition, they might be able to sell now to people who want to live on that block encouraging homeownership and additional stabilization. This example of synergy would work in some neighborhoods, while others may need more comprehensive approaches that include addressing crime, infrastructure, health care, economic development, etc.

Either way, the bottom line is that without sufficient concentration and strategic approaches taken, current levels of per project spending is bound to have little impact. And knowing when and how much impact has occurred would reinforce successful approaches.

Issue #3: Enough Capacity?

Problem Defined: The claim has often been made that even if public funds were more targeted and leveraged, organizational capacity is insufficient to use these funds in a meaningful way.

Capacity could be defined as the ability to implement. The greater one's capacity to plan strategically, have a well developed organizational structure, raise funds, and coordinate with other service providers, the greater the ability to implement. When it comes to implementing neighborhood development projects – building housing, installing infrastructure, improving parks, job training – few volunteer organizations have the capacity to implement. These types of jobs are usually tied to specialized implementers. Specialized implementers likely have a board and paid professional staff with technical expertise, experience, time, and resources to get the job done. Examples of specialized implementers can include City agencies, developers, banks, community development corporations (CDCs), private businesses, non-profits, schools, etc.

By their nature, volunteer neighborhood organizations are rarely equipped as specialized implementers. However, they are critical partners for neighborhood development in the role of community conveners and consensus builders. As representative of the neighborhood, they must define a vision for the area – what they want to see in the future – before enlisting
the help of specialized implementers. Without a neighborhood’s clear commitment and direction through planning, specialized implementers are apt not to follow.

Because of the need to rely more on local solutions to community development problems, it is imperative that non-profit, private, and public entities be equipped to provide results. The local government offers unique tools for development (e.g., tax incentives, TIF, eminent domain, grants, etc.) to aid an otherwise reluctant private market to respond. In addition, data collection can be more readily and evenly performed by local government to be shared with neighborhood partners. If any partners in this mutually beneficial equation are poorly equipped, they all suffer.

Some Success Stories
The relevance of these hypotheses can be illustrated in several neighborhood development projects over the last 25 years that have worked well in Topeka. Are they perfect? No, but their success and promise highlight lessons we can apply.

- **Jefferson Square** – This roughly 90-acre residential portion of the Jefferson Square neighborhood south of SE 21st Street and west of SE Adams Street was an urban renewal area (Highland Park-Pierce). A redevelopment plan was formulated with the neighborhood and adopted by the City in 1971. Of the nearly 200 parcels in the area, many were acquired by the Urban Renewal Agency (now defunct) for new single-family in-fill homes fitting the character of the neighborhood, other houses were rehabbed, curbs/gutters/sidewalks were installed, park space created, and blight removed. The Jefferson Villas elderly housing complex was privately developed in 1991 as an amendment to the adopted plan using State/Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funding.

- **Tennessee Town Plaza** – Located in the Tennessee Town neighborhood, the Topeka Housing Authority (THA) developed this 24-unit elderly/disabled public housing complex over the course of the 1980s on a city block. It remains one of THA’s most successful complexes with 98% occupancy and a design that fits the character of the neighborhood. It was built on a block anchored by the historic Buchanan School building. The project was never finished around the block largely because of dependence on Federal funding that did not materialize.

- **Pioneer Old Town** – Recently completed by the Pioneer Group, this project is transforming a 3-block section of the Old Town neighborhood area just north of Topeka High School. With the help of the LIHTC program, Pioneer acquired 3 large apartment complexes converting 179 units to a smaller density of 156 units including family friendly 3-bedroom units. In addition, the homes surrounding the apartments were acquired and replaced with 24 units of townhouse-style rental units that are designed to be architecturally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The complex will include a community space for health care, education, and social programs for the residents. According to the developer, 20% of the lease inquiries are from households that exceed the income limits.
NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT
TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2025

- Shorey Estates - The former 21-acre site of the Northland Manor public housing complex south of Lyman Road in North Topeka is being redeveloped by the City of Topeka for 24 units of mixed income single-family homes. This unique partnership which includes a combination of capital improvements, the State, tax incentives, CDBG funds, bank participation, and YMCA is offering at least 11 affordable 3-BR detached houses for a first mortgage of $50,000-$55,000. In addition, a 72-unit affordable senior rental community, Cottages of Topeka, is being constructed directly across Lyman Road.

Lessons Learned
- Community-based Planning - Jefferson Square and Tennessee Town evolved from a community-based planning effort to define a vision of what the neighborhood should be. In retrospect, the few success stories over the last 25 years may be evidence in and of itself that predictability to neighborhood development through better planning would have likely facilitated more projects like these. In any event, all the projects included neighborhood participation before or once proposed.
- Partnerships and Roles - All projects developed partnerships (some more extensive) between the community, the private sector, and the public sector. The Pioneer-type projects may not happen in the future without a better partnership with the public sector for land acquisition.
- Scope and Focus - All projects were sufficiently large enough yet focused to be economically viable and in some cases self-supporting. Tennessee Town Plaza has not had the kind of impact on surrounding blocks because the scope of the project was confined to less than a block and more comprehensive approach (ala Jefferson Square) was not used.
- Build off Assets/Investments - Most projects were located in an area where neighborhood institutional anchors existed (e.g., Topeka High School, Buchanan Center, YWCA)
- Design - All projects were very design conscious making it a priority to fit in well with the existing character of the neighborhood. Since all of the projects involved affordable housing, it should prove that low cost housing does not have to be stigmatized by poor design.
- Neighborhood Cycles - As mentioned before, all neighborhoods are in different stages of readiness and may require different approaches. Shorey Estates became doable because it was replacing the very blight that held an otherwise stable area back.
III. NEIGHBORHOOD WELLNESS STRATEGY

*Humans most basic instinct is a sense of belonging*

Mazlow

**VISION**

Neighborhoods in Topeka should be where...

Children can grow up and want to raise their own family in the same neighborhood;
People know who their neighbors are and they work together as neighbors;
Children can safely walk to school on sidewalks;
Pizza delivery is made after dark.

**Goal #1: Maximize Effectiveness of Local Government Regulatory “Toolbox”**

**Policies**

1. *Housing and nuisance code enforcement strategies should target neighborhoods based on their health in order to make the most impact.* Boarding-up vacated houses may be the most visible sign to the public that a neighborhood is in trouble. An entire set of new perceptions are introduced into people’s minds – residents and non-residents – that trigger a perceived and consequently, real, downward spiral. There are many reasons why a house becomes and stays vacant (e.g., deceased owner, speculators, poorly screened tenants, lack of dollars for repairs, foreclosure, etc.). If a neighborhood is considered *out patient*, there is good potential of a vacated house to be rehabbed and efforts to board it up quickly should be discouraged. Likewise, code enforcement efforts are best when concentrated on areas that are economically stable and that are not so severely distressed.

   ✔ **Action Step:** Concentrate comprehensive enforcement efforts in *at risk* or other responsive *intensive care* areas on vacant and renter-occupied units while expanding exterior code loan programs. (NS/HND)

   ✔ **Action Step:** Expand Problem Resolution Team concept to target blocks with chronic and long standing problems. (CCS, Fire, Police, Planning, Legal, etc.)

   ✔ **Action Step:** Place responsibility of effective anti-blight programs (e.g., graffiti, dumpster, etc.) within Neighborhood Services to compliment enforcement activities. (NS/HND)

2. *Make prevention a priority of housing and nuisance code enforcement.* The goal of housing and code compliance programs should be to improve the health of neighborhoods as well as houses/properties. To that end, the best “cure” for neighborhoods will be the prevention of problem properties before they get out of control.

   ✔ **Action Step:** Develop a voluntary rental certificate program as an incentive for landlords that includes housing/nuisance code and crime-free training; link
certificate requirement to NRP applications, court actions, high code violators, etc. (NS, Safe Streets, Police, Courts)

✓ **Action Step:** Promote “neighbor to neighbor” outreach programs to make neighborhoods more self-reliant (e.g., volunteer mowing, painting, etc.) (NS)

✓ **Action Step:** Expand Problem Resolution Team concept to target blocks with chronic and long standing problems to prevent cases from reaching court system. (NS, Fire, Police, Planning, Legal, etc.)

3. **Encourage viable alternatives to demolitions based on neighborhood conditions.** Some older neighborhoods with architecturally significant housing stock are uniquely qualified to preserve these assets for the greater good of a neighborhood’s revitalization. The same neighborhood might have one or more blocks that are badly deteriorated with a high number of vacant lots. Based on the neighborhood’s specific health, stability, and revitalization potential, different “demolition strategies” may be applied to either encourage conservation of the existing housing stock or clearance to facilitate future infill development. In addition, the cost of moving should be subsidized in some cases.

✓ **Action Step:** Change City Code to require relocated dwellings meet “minimum housing standards” instead of uniform building code requirements. (DS)

✓ **Action Step:** Seed a relocation/restoration fund for historic and non-historic structures. Incorporate Section 106 review as appropriate for historic resources. (LC/HND)

4. **Promote economic incentives for in-fill housing development within urban neighborhoods.** Making it attractive to “recycle” urban neighborhoods should be a high priority to improve the health of our more distressed areas. Many factors influence new housing construction within urban neighborhoods vs. suburban edge development outside urban service areas. However, where existing infrastructure is in place and paid for, new in-fill housing development could take place without substantial public expenditures or degradation to the environment.

✓ **Action Step:** Perform critical assessment of NRP tax rebate program and amend as needed to provide more targeted incentive formulas for high/above average priority areas. (Planning, City Council)

✓ **Action Step:** Increase “subsidies” (e.g., soft second mortgages, downpayment assistance, landbanking, 203K program, relocation match, etc.) for urban in-fill housing projects. (Consolidated Plan)

5. **Facilitate private/non-profit in-fill development by using public land acquisition tools.** Private redevelopment and in-fill efforts are frustrated because of land speculation and unclear titles, liens, tax delinquencies, etc. Public entities can be authorized to acquire property through condemnation so they can be offered to the private/non-profit sectors for development. Strategies aimed at reducing the private cost or risk for in-fill development should be pursued. A quasi-public land development corporation could help facilitate activities such as land banking, land assembly, and clearing titles to package land within neighborhoods. Long-range planning will help to identify appropriate new in-fill housing sites and market their eventual redevelopment.
NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT
TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2025

✓ Action Step: Create a quasi-public land development agency responsible for implementing and facilitating neighborhood land development and begin a landbanking program in high priority redevelopment areas. (City Administration)

6. **Complete neighborhood downzoning process.** Since late 1997, 4 neighborhoods – College Hill, Quinton Heights, Chesney Park, and Holliday Park – involving 1,650 properties have been "downzoned" from two/multiple-family residential and commercial districts to single-family districts. 6 more neighborhoods are under consideration by the City including Historic North Topeka's 1,100 parcels which are scheduled for consideration in year 2000. Other neighborhoods in Oakland and East Topeka could also be included.

✓ Action Step: Implement “Neighborhood and Area Plan Schedule” in Section IV. (Planning)

7. **Make the tax delinquent property sale process work for neighborhood revitalization.** Some 3,000 properties in the County representing $10 million are listed as having a delinquent tax record, most within distressed neighborhoods. Under current practice, a tax delinquent property will wait 7-8 years before being put up for auction once or twice a year even though a residential property becomes eligible for sale after only 3 years (commercial 2 years and abandoned property 1 year). Also, partial payments on the back tax will keep a property from being eligible for sale. About 200 properties are noticed per auction with a listing in the newspaper unrelated to their location by area or neighborhood. State statutes determine that this process takes about a year to complete once properties are identified for auction. This lengthy process is further made cumbersome by the inability to geographically identify where eligible properties are located by neighborhood or at least notifying potential housing providers. State law also allows the County to forgive the back taxes on a property if it is used for affordable housing purposes.

✓ Action Step: Create and maintain a GIS-based map showing eligible properties by neighborhood for public information. (County Appraiser/Planning)

✓ Action Step: Give priority to properties that are in intensive care or at risk areas by allowing them to be sold upon their eligibility even with partial payments. (County Appraiser/Counsel)

✓ Action Step: Increase allocation of resources to process more properties per year including mailing notices to surrounding property owners/residents. (County/City)

✓ Action Step: Work proactively with affordable housing providers who can acquire properties for affordable housing development. (County Counsel/HND)

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**Goal #2: Coordinate Funding To Produce Measurable Improvement in Neighborhood "Health"**

**Policies**

1. **Base neighborhood development funding on long-range neighborhood/area plans.** Requests by organizations and the local government for community
development funding are often made in reaction to solving a short-term problem or because they can. This “chasing of dollars” expends valuable time and resources with no real hope for lasting impact because they are disconnected from the context of a comprehensive development plan. Instead, the dollars make the most impact when they “chase” the community’s plan.

✓ **Action Step:** Give priority to grant applications and projects within the Consolidated Plan and CIP budgets that are implementing adopted neighborhood or area plans. (City Administration, HND)

✓ **Action Step:** Implement “Area and Neighborhood Plan Schedule” in Section IV. (Planning)

✓ **Action Step:** Develop a Neighborhood Planning Handbook establishing acceptable planning guidelines and standards for all neighborhoods to develop appropriate plans on their own or with outside facilitation. (Planning, HND)

2. **Base treatment for neighborhoods on a “continuum of care” approach.** Those neighborhoods that are most distressed (*intensive care*) require the most intervention and therefore, will require sizeable resources and attention. But if all relevant resources are devoted to an *intensive care* area, a neighborhood at risk for an unstable *out-patient* neighborhood may fall prey to blighting influences themselves. To avoid “pushing the blight around”, a three-pronged approach, or continuum of care, should be employed. First, prevention strategies should be employed for *healthy* or *out-patient* neighborhoods. Secondly, revitalization strategies should augment prevention strategies for those neighborhoods at risk that have development potential (e.g., adjacent to *healthy* areas). Lastly, *intensive care* neighborhoods would be eligible for more aggressive treatment or comprehensive approaches that require greater intervention.

✓ **Action Step:** Implement priority-based system of treatment within a new 5-year Consolidated Plan. (Planning/HND)

3. **Coordinate Consolidated Plan budget with City budget.** The Consolidated Plan budget cycle is currently out of synch with the City budget cycle making decisions for CDBG/HOME funding premature to City budget priorities. Likewise, capital improvements and departmental operations are not strongly linked to community development priorities. The Comprehensive Plan sets forth policies and priorities for Topeka/Shawnee County that should be implemented through all budget processes. Budgets should not be combined, but coordinated project by project. For example, if XS’s of CDBG/HOME are recommended for Neighborhood “A” then the CIP budget should also look at recommending XS’s for infrastructure to make a greater impact.

✓ **Action Step:** Develop a new 5-year Consolidated Plan implementing the goals, policies, and priorities of the Neighborhood Element by Fall of 2000. (Planning/HND)

✓ **Action Step:** Change the Consolidated Plan budget cycle to coincide with the City's budget cycle starting January 1, 2001

✓ **Action Step:** Transfer primary responsibility of the Consolidated Plan process to Metro Planning. (Planning/HND)
4. **Increase the capacity of Topeka’s community development corporations (CDCs) and other specialized implementers for housing production.** CDCs are a uniquely American force for community renewal. CDCs should take a comprehensive approach to addressing problems of blighted areas, combining economic development and housing with an array of community building activities ranging from organizing and job training to crime fighting, teen counseling, and senior care. CDCs are not parachuted into a distressed community – they are indigenous and born in the community they serve. They partner with for-profit institutions and undertake major fund raising capabilities to develop housing projects, community lending, and other community development needs. In an era of ever-decreasing public resources, it is imperative that the capacity of local CDCs and other neighborhood intermediary institutions is enhanced or created in Topeka to bridge gaps between local government agencies, the business community, community groups, and residents.

- **Action Step:** Work with an existing non-profit housing organization(s) to become a NeighborWorks affiliate of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. (HND/Planning/City Administration)
- **Action Step:** Utilize programs such as HUD’s Section 108 program for leveraging high priority economic development and homeownership initiatives. (City Administration/HND/Planning)
- **Action Step:** Capitalize and maintain a local affordable housing trust fund (private/public sectors).
- **Action Step:** Capitalize existing landmarks preservation fund. (City Council)

5. **Base neighborhood development funding on ability to leverage non-city funding.** City resources alone will no longer complete neighborhood transformations let alone start them in many cases. To truly make an impact it should be expected that housing and non-housing neighborhood development supported with City funding be prioritized to reward projects that leverage non-City funds or that will best stimulate private market investment into an area.

- **Action Step:** Work to attract local and non-local private development corporation funding to high priority neighborhoods. (Consolidated Plan)

6. **Monitor health of neighborhoods to measure progress and reward success.** How will we know if the policies and action steps are making a difference in the vital signs and stability indicators of our neighborhoods? “Keeping score” is vital to knowing who is doing well and who is not to help make adjustments as we go. Sharing this information will also be useful to neighborhoods themselves to help develop short and long-range plans for the future. Making sure the information is consistent, relevant, and current establishes a common ground from which the neighborhoods, City, and private sector can strategize from addressing agreed upon trends and issues.

- **Action Step:** Develop and maintain a shared GIS-based database of condition and trend profiles by neighborhood. (Planning - lead; all other Departments as needed)

7. **Create a broad-based advisory body to the Metropolitan Planning Commission, City, and County governing bodies for issues affecting neighborhood**
development. City code establishes the Community Development Advisory Council (CDAC) to “advise the community and economic development director concerning activities of the department related to community development.” The membership is limited to two representatives from each certified NIA and nine at-large members. When created in the 1970’s, this represented the City’s attempt to involve citizen participation from neighborhoods as mandated for receiving federal funding. However, to achieve more meaningful input on all matters affecting the health of Topeka neighborhoods, this group’s role and structure should shift to meet new challenges: a smaller, autonomous, well-informed body of citizenry representing planning areas and stakeholders in the neighborhood development process. Their role should include planning, advocacy, information sharing, program evaluation, as well as advising.

✓ Action Step: Utilize representatives of Metro Planning, Neighborhood Services, Police, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and the private sector as non-voting advisors to the CDAC. (CDAC, City Administration)

Goal #3: Strive for Greater Sense of Community

Policies

1. **Give greater emphasis to neighborhood-friendly initiatives that prevents crime.**

More and more neighborhoods are impacted by development, not because of a particular use but because of a site design that seems disconnected from fitting in with the built environment around it. Poor design can also encourage criminal activity to take root. The placement of fences, shrubbery, doors, walkways, lighting, etc. are critical to a design that promotes safety and compatibility with a neighborhood.

✓ Action Step: Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles within a site plan and building design review ordinance. (Police/Planning/Public Works)

✓ Action Step: Expand community policing program, including bike patrols. (Police)

✓ Action Step: Continue to implement mobilization programs at the neighborhood and block level. (Safe Streets)

2. **Plan for neighborhoods instead of subdivisions; plan for people, not cars.** As more obstacles – longer commutes, dependency on automobile trips, loss of open space/natural habitat, the Internet, cul-de-sacs – disconnect people from society in general, our search for a sense of community becomes greater. It is not surprising to know that people are increasingly willing to pay a premium to live in a higher density neighborhood (new or old) where there are walkable connections to the streets, parks, schools, businesses, and neighbors with a variety of housing choices close-by.* The principles of new urbanism or traditional neighborhood design foster greater social interaction and are likelier to achieve the lost sense of community many people feel in suburban-style developments. Many of Topeka’s older neighborhoods were designed with this in mind, hence the term traditional neighborhoods. Many of the post-World
War II developments are subdivisions designed in isolation from their surroundings and pedestrians. Today’s codes and standards are set by those post-War standards. Promoting alternative codes and design standards for traditional neighborhood development would provide a choice the current regulations do not allow for.

✓ Action Step: Develop “traditional neighborhood design” subdivision regulations and standards as an alternative to existing subdivision regulations and standards (Planning/Public Works)

✓ Action Step: Develop site plan and building design review ordinances to promote high quality and compatible infill development. (Planning)

*Values the New Urbanism: The Impact of the New Urbanism On Prices of Single Family Homes (Urban Land Institute – 1999)

3. **Organize neighborhoods proportionate to their scale and needs.** The average population of a Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) is almost 3,000 people. The size of an ideal traditional neighborhood is 1,000 to 2,000 people. Neighborhoods that are too large or diverse are apt to fall under their own weight because of the many needs, ability to control circumstances, and difficulty in achieving consensus. While it is important to organize on a micro-level (the smallest level being a block) it will also be important to come back together as a larger community to deal with issues that cross neighborhood boundaries. Crime may be affecting specific blocks of a neighborhood, but the need to create jobs/job skills usually goes beyond the neighborhood-level and into a multi-neighborhood or community level. At least two sets of organizational structures are necessary for effective planning – one at the neighborhood-level and another at the macro-level that represents many neighborhoods in a larger, yet distinct, geographical planning area of the city with similar needs.

✓ Action Step: Establish a set of 7 “planning areas” – Central, Downtown, East, North, South, Southwest, and West – to help disseminate information, measure progress and health of areas, develop area plans and priorities, organize advisory bodies, etc. (Planning, City Departments)

✓ Action Step: Assist in the organization of smaller resident-based neighborhood-scale civic groups. (HND/Safe Streets)

4. **Make schools the center of the community.** Schools have a profound impact on the development of neighborhoods. The quality or perceived lack thereof in a school affects decisions about a family’s choice of neighborhood location. Likewise, schools have become the anchoring pride of many neighborhoods. Providing linkages between the school and neighborhood is important to facilitate a sense of “ownership” among residents even if they do not have children attending that school. That may mean opening up the school to neighborhood group meetings or adult education classes in the evening, sharing recreational equipment, collaborating on neighborhood events, after-school events for youth groups, business partnerships, etc.

✓ Action Step: Adopt policies supporting design and use of school space/grounds as inviting daylong and lifelong learning centers serving the spectrum of community needs. (USD 501)
5. **New in-fill housing should appropriately blend into a neighborhood’s existing character.** Demolition of residential dwellings continues to take place at an alarming pace within the oldest neighborhoods of the city that still retain their unique historic integrity. And while the need for new in-fill housing has never been greater, the community’s perception of in-fill housing is one of poor design that exhibits little connection to the neighborhood’s character. The orientation, massing, form, and materials used in new building design can properly fit within a neighborhood’s existing character so that in-fill housing contributes instead of detracts.

- **Action Step:** Authorize building design review and enforcement within the zoning regulations and apply to districts with special design considerations. (Planning)
- **Action Step:** Develop, adopt, and enforce appropriate design guidelines for neighborhoods or identified image corridors/areas. (Planning/LC)
- **Action Step:** Amend zoning regulations to remove barriers to urban in-fill housing development. (Planning)

6. **Include Downtown as the City’s “neighborhood”**. Broadly defined, the boundaries of Downtown either pass over or are adjacent to 9 different neighborhoods. What happens in Downtown and the near-Downtown neighborhoods have a profound affect on one another. If Downtown is not healthy, neither can its nearby neighborhoods and vice-a-versa. Initiatives that support Downtown as a “round-the-clock” experience to work, live, and play will only help create more of a demand to live in nearby neighborhoods. Likewise, strategies that bring new investment to near-Downtown neighborhoods should be planned for that is mutually beneficial to those neighborhoods and Downtown.

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**Goal #4: Balance Mixed-Income Neighborhood Investment Throughout The City**

*The core of our nation’s urban problem – the concentration of poor minorities – is just plain unnecessary. America is not a third world country in which the poor are many and the middle classes are few. On the contrary, the middle classes are many and the poor are relatively few.*

David Rusk, *Inside Game Outside Game*, 1999

**Policies**

1. **Reward programs and projects that foster mixed-income neighborhoods.** The isolation and concentration of low-income households is probably the most reliable determinant of damaging social ills for a neighborhood. Community development and housing funding has a tendency to maintain the deteriorating conditions of a neighborhood by concentrating more and more affordable housing in an area. The City’s TOTO program has been an extremely successful affordable homeownership program, but the vast majority of homes are located in high owner-occupied stable neighborhoods. While this presumably advances mixed-income neighborhoods, there is no comparable program or response to attract homeowners (affordable or market rate) back to the older neighborhoods where poverty is highest. Poverty rates of those inner-city neighborhoods will only increase if people keep leaving, thus decreasing their...
collective buying power and making it more difficult to attract needed commercial services.

✓ **Action Step**: Pursue initiatives, such as HUD’s Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy initiative, that provide incentives for market rate housing within historically lower income neighborhoods. (HND/Planning)

✓ **Action Step**: Add “compatible” density bonuses or other regulatory incentives for new market rate residential projects/subdivisions that include affordable housing units. (Planning)

2. **Establish standards for “basic services” in neighborhoods.** To live in one of Topeka’s urban neighborhoods should equate to an expectation of some basic services – curb, gutter, sidewalks, lighting, parks, clean streets/alleys, etc. New development can pass the cost of this infrastructure onto homebuyers thus further widening income disparities between new and old neighborhoods. Older neighborhoods that need to retrofit sidewalks within public rights-of-way so children don’t have to walk in the street are at a disadvantage since current policy would force the property owners to “tax” themselves to pay for improvements. Many of these neighborhoods were annexed under the auspice of having “open ditches” filled. A long-term commitment to fulfilling basic services should be engaged so that older and newer neighborhoods are on level playing fields in terms of investment.

✓ **Action Step**: Change policy for sidewalk/curb installation and repair within older neighborhoods to reflect city at-large funding. (Public Works, City Council)

3. **Work to provide a jobs/housing balance in all areas of the city.** Economic development decisions are generally made at a level beyond the scale of a neighborhood. Since economics tend to drive neighborhood location decisions, it is in the best interest of all neighborhoods that a balanced economic development strategy be established for all areas of the City – north, south, east, and west. Accordingly, access to jobs and job training also goes beyond a neighborhood level. Job and job training opportunities should not be limited to geographic areas based upon bus routes and schedules. Use economic development, transportation, and housing initiatives to ensure that there is a proportionate match for each planning area. In particular, give priority to job training and work force initiatives that are community-based and serve neighborhoods of greatest need.

✓ **Action Step**: Perform bus route analysis to determine where rider demand and job supply is highest and align routes/schedules accordingly. (TMTA)

✓ **Action Step**: Adopt policies supporting utilization of school space as lifelong learning centers for job training/readiness skills. (USD 501)

✓ **Action Step**: Expand and support micro-enterprise loan program for day care centers.

✓ **Action Step**: Identify and develop new major housing and employment centers to serve Eastern Topeka. (Planning Commission, Go Topeka)

✓ **Action Step**: Support continuation of the current evening and weekend transit service. (TMTA)
✓ **Action Step:** Require transit and pedestrian access on private property where jobs are located as well as on public right-of-ways.

✓ **Action Step:** Educate and encourage employers to utilize employer incentives for transit service. (MPO)

4. **Ensure that housing programs or economic initiatives are substantially addressing neighborhood revitalization needs.** Almost half of all Neighborhood Revitalization Program tax rebates on residential improvements have occurred in either healthy or out-patient neighborhoods. First-time homeowner programs are also geared towards more stable neighborhoods as is evidenced by the City’s TOTO program only completing 7% of their homes in intensive care areas and 30% in at risk areas. The NRP, TOTO, and any other housing and economic development programs should be weighted more to the intensive care or at risk neighborhoods where dis-investment has already rooted itself as opposed to areas where investment is market-driven.

✓ **Action Step:** Design a first-time affordable homeownership program that primarily benefits underserved at risk/intensive care neighborhoods. (Non-Profits)

✓ **Action Step:** Perform critical assessment of NRP tax rebate program and amend as needed to provide more targeted incentive formulas for high/above average priority areas. (Metro Planning, City Council)

✓ **Action Step:** Support large-scale redevelopment projects where market forces will not support rehabilitation in high priority areas.

5. **Support appropriate growth for all planning areas of the city.** Lack of growth hurts entrepreneurs and business growth and the financial community doesn’t see benefit of lending in no-growth atmosphere. As the City grows, ensure that neighborhoods are not left behind and that new neighborhoods are protected.

✓ **Action Step:** Identify growth and employment areas balanced city-wide within new Comprehensive Plan/Growth Management element. (Planning, Planning Commission)

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**Goal #5: Educate Public on Urban Neighborhood Living and Development**

**Policies**

1. **Reinforce and market positive aspects of our neighborhoods.** Neighborhoods who develop working relationships with realtors/media/schools and market their neighborhoods stand a much better chance at making potential homebuyers feel welcomed. A well-organized and active neighborhood association can be a major selling point for those that might not have first-hand knowledge of the assets, accomplishments, or goals on improvements to the area.

✓ **Action Step:** Promote neighborhood media events, open houses, home tours, block parties, school activities, etc. at the neighborhood level. (Neighborhood Groups)
NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT

TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE METROPOLITAN PLAN 2025

✓ **Action Step:** Establish a "Chamber of Commerce" group for inner-city neighborhoods to promote/recruit clients to the area. (Neighborhood Groups, Chamber of Commerce)

2. **Share information with neighborhoods on community-wide development issues and projects.** Since all neighborhood plans should be community-based, they typically require an extensive community education process. A concerted effort needs to be made that will give everyone an equal foundation of knowledge about neighborhood conditions, programs, and trends, etc. Before a project or idea is implemented, information should be shared with the neighborhood or larger planning area. Likewise, this two-way communication street needs to include neighborhoods continually sharing information on their needs/priorities and having it be the basis for city/county decisions. Utilizing electronic mediums should be a priority.

✓ **Action Step:** Enact 5-year review and update of Neighborhood Element with extensive community involvement process. Update data within Neighborhood Element after 2000 Census results are released. (Planning, Planning Commission)

3. **Understand market demand and supply for under-serviced neighborhoods.** Many of our older neighborhoods are under-served in terms of retail services or even new housing stock because there has not been a concerted effort to understand the market demand in these areas. Greenfield suburban development will always be preferred because it is the real estate industry norm. "New" markets should be aggressively sought out in neighborhoods left behind to convince brokers, developers, and businesses that opportunities exist for financially-sound development.

✓ **Action Step:** Perform market study analysis of under-serviced neighborhoods and educate real estate development community of opportunities. (CDCs, Private Consultants)

4. **Discourage intentional and unintentional “steering”**. A dilemma that plagues our older neighborhoods is the act of "steering" or offering a bias of opinion against these areas. True, older homes may not appeal to some or a preference for certain school districts excludes some older neighborhoods. There are certainly legitimate personal preferences as expressed by any homebuyer. However, professionals such as realtors, government employees, teachers, police, banks, etc. who are in daily contact with the public and make first or lasting impressions upon new residents should be educated on the positive aspects of many of these older neighborhoods and not left to jaded broad-brush perceptions.

✓ **Action Step:** Expand Fast-Forward program to act as ambassadors for new residents to the city. (Chamber of Commerce)

✓ **Action Step:** Establish a "Chamber of Commerce" group for inner-city neighborhoods to promote/recruit clients to the area.

✓ **Action Step:** Amend zoning regulations to remove barriers to urban infill development. (Planning)

5. **Promote legal and moral responsibilities of property ownership.**
ORGANIZATION KEY

NS – Neighborhood Services (City)
CDAC – Community Development Advisory Council
DS – Development Services (City-Planning)
HND – Housing and Neighborhood Development (City)
HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LC – Landmarks Commission
MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization (i.e., Planning Commission)
Planning – Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department
TMTA – Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority
PRIORITIES & TREATMENTS
If always faced with limited public resources and the need to make the most of those limited resources, where should we be putting our time, effort, and dollars to effect the greatest impact? Three major categories have been identified to filter these decisions - geographic priorities, activity priorities, and effectiveness priorities.

Neighborhood Priority Areas
Neighborhood development activities and projects should be weighted towards a neighborhood’s health, stability, and revitalization potential as described in Section I of the Neighborhood Element and illustrated on the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Health Rating</th>
<th>Neighborhood Stability Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-Patient</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Care</td>
<td>High</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **High Priority** – Neighborhood areas that have the poorest health or that are rapidly declining, but that can be revitalized through moderately aggressive intervention over a short period of time due to substantial revitalization activity or potential.
- **Above Average Priority** – Declining or rapidly declining at risk/intensive care neighborhood areas with the poorest health that will require significant stimulus and major intervention over a longer period of time because of the magnitude of poor health conditions or the lack of substantial revitalization activity/potential.
- **Average Priority** – Stable/rising at-risk neighborhoods or declining out patient neighborhood areas of favorable health that will require either minor intervention or prevention measures to address a significant neighborhood need. Rising healthy neighborhoods may require some planning intervention to prevent incompatibilities.
• Low Priority – Neighborhood areas of favorable or optimal health conditions that are least in need of intervention.

Housing and Non-Housing Priorities
Generally, neighborhood development activities can be classified under two broad categories – housing and non-housing. Since most neighborhoods are primarily residential by definition, housing becomes a large enough issue to stand on its own. While some of the activities may be more pertinent to some neighborhoods than others, the list of priorities below should represent “city-wide” priorities to guide neighborhood revitalization.

Based on the results of the city-wide Focus Group meetings held in November, 1999, the following priority levels were established (see Table below). Within each broad category (housing and non-housing) specific activities have been grouped into priority levels, showing the relative weight to be given to each activity. For example, greater priority should be given to those projects that incorporate Level I housing activities than Level II housing activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority Level</th>
<th>Housing Activities Weighted Priority (1.7)</th>
<th>Non-Housing Activities Weighted Priority (1.3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
<td>Homeownership</td>
<td>Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level II</td>
<td>In-fill New Construction</td>
<td>Code Enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level III</td>
<td>Historic Preservation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Rental Assistance</td>
<td>Homeless</td>
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<td>Level III</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level IV</td>
<td>Rental Assistance</td>
<td>Homeless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project Effectiveness Priorities
In addition to the activity priorities identified above, the following criteria should be used to measure the effectiveness of any neighborhood development project or program. Based on the results of the city-wide Focus Group meetings, the following weights were established:

• Leverage (28% of points): Use of resources to gain access to and use of additional resources through partnerships and collaboration with public, private, non-profit sectors and the community. A threshold range of 1:1 to 1:3 should be established.

• Organizational Capacity (26% of points): The ability to successfully implement a project, program, or process that can be measured by past performance. Technical and organizational expertise should be demonstrated such as an adequate board to oversee the activities of staff and a clear separation of authority between the board and staff.

• Impact (24% of points): The scope of the total project is sufficiently large enough and strategic to make a measurable impact on a neighborhood(s). Service delivery in the same area that is coordinated will have greatest impact.
Goals and Policies (22% of points): Project consistency with stated goals and implementation of the Neighborhood Element and adopted Neighborhood/Area Plans.

**Neighborhood Treatments**

Neighborhoods exist in various states of health in their life cycle (see Section I). It is important that this be taken into account when determining which revitalization strategies to employ in a neighborhood. The type and magnitude of treatment prescribed for a neighborhood will depend on the neighborhood's vital signs and stability. For instance a stable, healthy neighborhood may not require any public intervention, while a neighborhood in decline may require treatments to preventing it from falling into a lower health category.

The table below summarizes appropriate types of treatments that could be prescribed based on the neighborhood's health and stability. Each neighborhood has unique characteristics, issues and needs and those will have to be identified through more detailed neighborhood plans. However, this can serve as a guide to the appropriate treatment for types of neighborhoods. The shaded cells indicate more costly public intervention measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Health Rating</th>
<th>Rising</th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Declining</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>Compatibility Measures: new development is compatible with existing uses.</td>
<td>Prevention Measures: code enforcement, traffic calming, organization</td>
<td>Prevention Measures: code enforcement, traffic calming, organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-Patient</td>
<td>Compatibility Measures: new development is compatible with existing uses.</td>
<td>Prevention Measures: code enforcement, traffic calming, organization</td>
<td>Minor Intervention: downzoning, enhancement program, housing rehabilitation, code enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>Momentum Enhancement: commercial façade rehab, housing rehab, historic district.</td>
<td>Minor Intervention: commercial façade rehab, downzoning, &quot;team&quot; code enforcement, housing rehabilitation</td>
<td>Moderate Intervention: downzoning, first-time homeownership, in-fill housing, mixed income subsidy, spot redevelopment, Major Intervention (if rapidly declining)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Care</td>
<td>Momentum Enhancement/Minor Intervention: housing rehab, in-fill housing, comm. façade rehab</td>
<td>Moderate Intervention: housing rehab, first-time homeownership, in-fill housing, spot redevelopment, &quot;team&quot; code enforcement</td>
<td>Major Intervention: large-scale redevelopment, in-fill housing, new infrastructure, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Compatibility Measures** - When a relatively healthy area is experiencing significant development pressure it is important to make sure that the new development occurs in an orderly fashion and that it is compatible with the character of existing development.

• **Preventive Measures** - This strategy is intended for Healthy or Out-Patient areas that are in danger of declining into a lower neighborhood health classification. Low cost prevention measures should be employed before the neighborhood begins to decline to the point where more costly public intervention is required.

• **Momentum Enhancement** - Activities should be geared towards sustaining momentum that already exists in neighborhoods which are in the process of revitalizing themselves typically by private market forces. Activities could include the removal or modification of regulatory barriers (i.e., building codes, zoning) to clear the path for development activity, or rehabilitation assistance. Often the inevitable result of neighborhood revitalization is an increase in the average cost of housing and the displacement of low-income households (i.e., gentrification). Therefore, activities in this category should also include programs to preserve affordable housing.

• **Minor Intervention** - This strategy involves a somewhat higher level of public expenditure than momentum enhancement activities, with the emphasis remaining on regulatory intervention. Some small-scale physical intervention may be required. Activities within this strategy may include some prevention measures in declining neighborhoods and some momentum enhancement activities in rising neighborhoods.

• **Moderate Intervention** - This strategy involves an increased emphasis on more costly physical improvements and economic incentives. Special regulatory intervention (e.g., concentrated code enforcement) may be necessary. Specific activities could include small-scale in-fill housing, “spot” redevelopment projects, and first time homebuyers assistance.

• **Major Intervention** - This strategy involves the most aggressive and comprehensive approach requiring a significant amount of public investment and commitment. Major land redevelopment activities are appropriate. This strategy should be employed in areas in the most advanced states of decline.
IV. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Not everything that counts can be counted. Not everything that can be counted counts.

Albert Einstein

After identifying goals, policies, priorities, and actions in the Neighborhood Wellness Strategy (Section III), it is essential to chart a course for their realization. Implicit in this charting should be a way to know if we are still on course. The following section sets forth guidelines that will further specify direction and measure our collective progress in achieving the vision for our neighborhoods.

Benchmarks

How will we know when we've reached our vision? Trying to quantify a 25-year vision is not an exact science. Many key factors are not quantifiable and many quantifiable factors may not tell us the whole story. But to give us a better idea if we are close to being on track, a set of 12 benchmarks are recommended to measure our progress towards achieving the vision as supported by the goals and policies of Section III. They include:

1) 15% of new population growth county-wide by 2030 occurs within current city neighborhoods (not including newly annexed areas)
   MEASURE: Annually by permit count and in 2002, 2012, and 2022 by Census
   ACHIEVE BY: 2030

2) Reduce number of intensive care census block groups from 21 to 11; at risk from 28 to 18
   ACHIEVE BY: show progress when measured; ultimate achievement by 2025

3) Reduce known vacant/boarded-up unit count by 50%.
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005

4) Hold 1 community outreach meeting per planning area to review accomplishments, progress, and needs
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: Annually

5) Average 3 to 1 funding leverage for neighborhood development projects receiving city funds
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005

6) 70% of all community development funding towards housing activities, 30% for non-housing activities
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005
7) Double the amount of tax delinquent properties sold annually and triple the number of properties sold within intensive care neighborhoods.
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005

8) 75% of all Neighborhood Revitalization Program applications are within intensive care/at risk areas.
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005

9) 67% of first-time homeowner units concentrated in at risk and intensive care areas with no less than 33% in intensive care.
   MEASURE: Annually
   ACHIEVE BY: 2005

10) No net loss of single-family housing units for Central, Downtown, East, and North Planning Districts in the short-term with a 15% increase in net units in the long-term.
    MEASURE: Annually
    ACHIEVE BY: 2005 (no net loss), 2010 (increase in units)

11) Neighborhood vital signs improve:
    - Healthy – 5/5 signs improve or stay the same
    - Out Patient – 4/5 signs improve or stay the same
    - At Risk – 3/5 signs improve or stay the same
    - Intensive Care – 2/5 signs improve or stay the same
    ACHIEVE BY: when measured

12) Pizza is delivered everywhere at anytime.
    MEASURE: Once every 5 years
    ACHIEVE BY: 2005
**Action Step Timelines**
The following actions steps that were identified in Section III should begin at certain time intervals over the next 5 years. In the table below, the action steps are separated into the following timeframes: actions that are occurring or need to begin immediately (Now), actions that should begin in the near future (1-2 years), and actions that should begin prior to the Element’s 5-year review (3-5 years).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Begin When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate comprehensive enforcement efforts in at risk or other responsive intensive care areas on vacant and renter-occupied units while expanding exterior code loan programs. (NS/HND)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place responsibility of effective anti-blight programs (e.g., graffiti, dumpster, etc.) within Neighborhood Services to compliment enforcement activities. (NS/HND)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Problem Resolution Team concept to target blocks with chronic and long standing problems. (CCS, Fire, Police, Planning, Legal, etc.)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand Problem Resolution Team concept to target blocks with chronic and long standing problems to prevent cases from reaching court system. (NS, Fire, Police, Planning, Legal, etc.)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the Consolidated Plan budget cycle to coincide with the City’s budget cycle starting January 1, 2001 (City Administration)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement “Neighborhood and Area Plan Schedule” in Section IV. (Planning)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify growth and employment areas balanced city-wide within new Comprehensive Plan/Growth Management element. (Planning, Planning Commission)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work to attract local and non-local private development corporation funding to high priority neighborhoods. (Consolidated Plan)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to implement mobilization programs at the neighborhood and block level. (Safe Streets)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assist in the organization of smaller resident-based neighborhood-scale civic groups. (HND/Safe Streets)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support continuation of the current evening and weekend transit service. (TMTA)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote neighborhood media events, open houses, home tours, block parties, school activities, etc. at the neighborhood level. (Neighborhood Groups)</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand and support micro-enterprise loan program for day care centers.</td>
<td>Now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote “neighbor to neighbor” outreach programs to make neighborhoods more self-reliant (e.g., volunteer mowing, painting, etc.) (NS)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change City Code to require relocated dwellings meet “minimum housing standards” instead of uniform building code requirements. (DS)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Action Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Begin When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase “subsidies” (e.g., soft second mortgages, downpayment, landbanking, 203K program, relocation match, etc.) for urban in-fill housing projects. (Consolidated Plan)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform critical assessment of NRP tax rebate program and amend as needed to provide more targeted incentive formulas for high/above average priority areas. (Planning, City Council)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a Neighborhood Planning Handbook establishing acceptable planning guidelines and standards for all neighborhoods to develop appropriate plans on their own or with outside facilitation. (Planning, HND)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement priority-based system of treatment within a new 5-year Consolidated Plan. (Planning/HND)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a new 5-year Consolidated Plan implementing the goals, policies, and priorities of the Neighborhood Element by Fall of 2000. (Planning/HND)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer responsibility of the Consolidated Plan process to Metro Planning. (Planning/HND)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with existing non-profit housing organization(s) to become a NeighborWorks affiliate of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation. (HND/Planning/City Administration)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amend zoning regulations to remove barriers to urban in-fill housing development. (Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop site plan and building design review ordinances to promote high quality and compatible infill development. (Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorize building design review and enforcement within the zoning regulations and apply to districts with special design considerations. (Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop “traditional neighborhood design” subdivision regulations and standards as an alternative to existing subdivision regulations and standards (Planning/Public Works)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add “compatible” density bonuses or other regulatory incentives for new market rate residential projects/subdivisions that include affordable housing units. (Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop, adopt, and enforce appropriate design guidelines for neighborhoods or identified image corridors/areas. (Planning/I.C.)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain a shared GIS-based database of condition and trend profiles by neighborhood. (Planning - lead; all other Departments as needed)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and maintain a GIS-based map showing eligible tax-sale properties by neighborhood for public information. (County Appraiser/Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give priority to properties that are in intese area or at risk areas by allowing them to be sold upon their eligibility even with partial payments. (County Appraiser/Counsel)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Action Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Give priority to grant applications and projects within the Consolidated Plan and CIP budgets that are implementing adopted neighborhood or area plans. (City Administration, HND)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue initiatives, such as HUD's Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy initiative, that provide incentives for market rate housing within historically lower income neighborhoods. (HIND/Planning)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalize existing landmarks preservation fund. (City Council)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize representatives of Metro Planning, Neighborhood Services, Police, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and the private sector as non-voting advisors to the CDAC. (CDAC, City Administration)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles within a site plan and building design review ordinance. (Police, Planning, Public Works)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a set of 7 &quot;planning areas&quot; – Central, Downtown, East, North, South, Southwest, and West – to help disseminate information, measure progress and health of areas, develop area plans and priorities, organize advisory bodies, etc. (Planning, City Departments)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt policies supporting design and use of school space/grounds as inviting daylong and lifelong learning centers serving the spectrum of community needs. (USD 501)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perform bus route analysis to determine where rider demand and job supply is highest and align routes/schedules accordingly. (TMTA)</td>
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<td>Design a first-time affordable homeownership program that primarily benefits underserved at risk/intensive care neighborhoods. (Non-Profits)</td>
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<td>Perform market study analysis of under-serviced neighborhoods and educate real estate development community of opportunities. (CDCs, Private Consultants)</td>
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<td>Expand Fast-Forward program to act as &quot;ambassadors&quot; for new residents to the city. (Chamber of Commerce)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change policy for sidewalk/curb installation and repair within older neighborhoods to reflect city at-large funding; target CIP funds annually for infrastructure that leverages private investment in high priority areas. (Public Works, City Council)</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a voluntary rental certificate program as an incentive for landlords that includes housing/nuisance code and crime-free training; link certificate requirement to NRF applications, court actions, high code violators, etc. (NS, Safe Streets, Police, Courts)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Action Steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Begin When?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seed a relocation/ restoration fund for historic and non-historic structures.</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Section 106 review as appropriate for historic resources. (LC/Consolidated Plan)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a quasi-public land development agency responsible for implementing and facilitating neighborhood land development and begin a landbanking program in high priority redevelopment areas. (City Administration)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enact 5-year review and update of Neighborhood Element with extensive community involvement process. Update data within Neighborhood Element after 2000 Census results are released. (Planning, Planning Commission)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase allocation of resources to process more tax delinquent properties per year including mailing notices to surrounding property owners/residents. (County Counsel/Metro Planning)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work proactively with affordable housing providers who can acquire properties for affordable housing development. (County Counsel/HND)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize programs such as HUD’s Section 108 program for leveraging high priority economic development and homeownership initiatives. (City Administration/HND/Planning)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a “Chamber of Commerce” group for inner-city neighborhoods to promote/recruit clients to the area. (Neighborhood Groups, Chamber of Commerce)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capitalize and maintain a local affordable housing trust fund (private/public sectors).</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand community policing program, including bike patrols. (Police)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require transit and pedestrian access on private property where jobs are located as well as public right-of-ways.</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage and utilize employer incentives for transit service.</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support large-scale redevelopment projects where market forces will not support rehabilitation in high priority areas.</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

NS – Neighborhood Services (City)  
CDAC – Community Development Advisory Council  
DS – Development Services (City-Public Works)  
HND – Housing and Neighborhood Development (City)  
HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
LC – Landmarks Commission  
Planning – Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department  
TMTA – Topeka Metropolitan Transit Authority
Selected Neighborhood Priority Areas
This chart depicts where selected neighborhoods fall within the neighborhood priority areas established in Section III (chart on page 35). Neighborhood priority areas are determined by their health as measured by their vital signs (Section I) and stability indicators (Table #1, Appendix). Selected neighborhood area boundaries are depicted on Map #7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Priority Areas</th>
<th>Neighborhood Stability Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising</td>
<td>Stable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Average</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy Declining</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out-Patient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (NE)</td>
<td>Oakland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (SE)</td>
<td>East End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (NE)</td>
<td>Oakland (Sardou)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (SE)</td>
<td>Holiday Park (S.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorey</td>
<td>Old Town (W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Care</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (NE)</td>
<td>Downton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward-Mead (SE)</td>
<td>East Topeka (Abbott)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Park (N.)</td>
<td>Hi-Crest (W.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Topeka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| High                        | (if rapidly declining with high revitalization potential) |
| Hi-Crest (NE)               | Monroe                                                     |
| Hi-Crest (SE)               | Historic North Topeka (S.)                                 |
| Above Average               | Central Highland Park (E.)                                 |
| Hi-Crest (NE)               | Central Highland Park (W.)                                 |
| At Risk                     | Historic North Topeka (N.)                                 |
| Above Average               | Old Town (E.)                                             |
| Intensive Care              | Central Highland Park (N.)                                 |
| Above Average               | East Topeka (Scott)                                        |
| Above Average               | Tennessee Town                                            |
| Intensive Care              | Chester Park                                               |
| Intensive Care              | East Topeka (NE)                                           |

July 2000
Section IV: Implementation Guidelines
NEIGHBORHOOD AREA PLANS
The purpose of the Neighborhood Element is to set general priorities and policies for neighborhood development. It is not within the scope of the Neighborhood Element to prescribe specific projects for specific neighborhoods. Therefore, more detailed community-based plans will need to be prepared at the neighborhood or area level in order to identify specific issues and needs. Neighborhood or area plans should identify specific projects, programs, and policies that are well suited to the needs and unique characteristics of that area and that are consistent with the broader community-wide goals of the Comprehensive Plan. All neighborhoods without specific plans shall be considered within area plans. The table below illustrates the relative priority that should be placed on neighborhood/area plans suitable for amendment to the Comprehensive Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood and Area Plan Schedule (Comp Plan)</th>
<th>Pre-2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003-2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Hill</td>
<td>DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinton Heights-Steele</td>
<td>DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chesney Park</td>
<td>LUP/DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holliday Park</td>
<td>LUP/DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic North Topeka</td>
<td>RP</td>
<td>DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td>RP Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>DP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Under development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee Town/Elmhurst</td>
<td>RP</td>
<td>RP/DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Topeka</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td>AP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washburn-Lane Parkway Corridor</td>
<td>DP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward-Mead</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td></td>
<td>LUP/DZ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Town</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td></td>
<td>LUP/DZ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
<td>DT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>LUP/DZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highland Park</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (West)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td></td>
<td>P/DZ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AP - Area Plan
DP - Design Plan
DT - Downtown Plan
DZ - Downzoning Study and Implementation
LUP - Land Use Plan
P - Neighborhood Plan Not Identified
RP - Revitalization Plan
INVESTMENT ALTERNATIVES
The following are funding policy options to implement the Neighborhood Element. The percentages are targets and should not be construed to mean that a certain percentage must be adhered to without regard to consistency with the Element’s goals, policies, and priorities. They also should not be construed as “caps” either in the event projects within priority neighborhoods are rated high and will accelerate their recovery. Each alternative could also be applied in combination with the other alternatives.

Investment Alternative #1: HIGH PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS
Majority of investment dedicated for neighborhood development (Consolidated Plan, CIP, TOTO, NRP, state/federal grants, etc.) would be within high priority areas. Remainder would be based on priority factors (health, activity, project), but should not exclude stabilization or prevention activities.

1st-5th Year Target: 50% high priority

Investment Alternative #2: PLANNING AREAS
Implement City-adopted plans for priority neighborhoods of a particular planning area (Map #2). Primary funding consideration would go to specified planning area to complete major implementation projects.

1st Year: Central
2nd Year: North
3rd Year: East
4th Year: South
5th Year: All planning areas
(Could be moved to 1st year)

Investment Alternative #3: ACTIVITY

1st-5th Year: 70% of investment would go towards housing activities and 30% towards non-housing activities.

REVIEW LEVELS
Three levels of review will be necessary once the Neighborhood Element is adopted. The first level should be an annual review that measures accomplishments of the action steps and suggests any minor modifications. A second level review would be accomplished upon release of the 2000 Census data expected in the year 2002. At this time, all neighborhood health data should be updated to measure progress and reaffirm health categories for neighborhood areas. A comprehensive third level of review should occur after 5 years to validate goals, policies, priorities, and benchmarks and suggest any major amendments.
APPENDIX
DEFINITION OF TERMS

Community – An area comprised of 2 or more neighborhoods.

Community Development – The process of improving the conditions of primarily low and moderate income neighborhoods and individuals through activities such as housing programs, economic development, job training/creation, public safety, social services, organization, etc.

Conservation – An increase in investment characterized by repairing or rehabilitating existing buildings or areas, which subsequently leads to increased activity. This is usually a decentralized process involving multiple individuals or organizations. May also be referred to as “Rehabilitation”.

Growth – An increase in the amount of population, employment, business enterprises, housing units, or income.

In-Fill Development – New building construction on vacant land within an established neighborhood/community that is currently served by urban infrastructure.

Local Economic Development – A process by which the local government and/or community-based groups enter into new partnership arrangements with private sector, or with each other, to create new jobs and stimulate economic activity in a well-defined economic zone. The primary goal is to increase either the number of job opportunities available to local people, or the job readiness skills of local people from “within”.

Neighborhood – A distinctive and cohesive geographical sub-unit of a city/county that is primarily residential and typically not exceeding 160 acres or 2,000 people.

Neighborhood Development – The process of improving the conditions of a neighborhood and its stakeholders based on a shared set of goals.

Neighborhood Health – The overall condition of a neighborhood at a given time.

Healthy – optimal condition

Out Patient – favorable condition

At Risk – emerging negative condition

Intensive Care – seriously distressed condition

Poverty Level – Income threshold where families and unrelated individuals are determined to spend more than one-third of their income on food consumption. Food consumption is defined as the minimum economy food plan by the USDA. Poverty levels are determined at a national average (1998 = $16,530, family of four) and are not adjusted for state or local price fluctuations.

Redevelopment – An increase in investment characterized by the demolition and clearance of existing buildings, assembling of land, and subsequent construction of new buildings.

Revised 10/22/99
and/or uses. This process dramatically changes existing built environments and is usually undertaken by one major organization.

**Revitalization** – An increase in investment for an area stimulated by redevelopment and/or conservation approaches.

**Stabilization** – Moderation in the rate of growth or decline to a sustainable level.

**Sustainability** – Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chesney Park</td>
<td>1:19</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downtown</td>
<td>0:14</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-36.1%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Topeka (NE)</td>
<td>0:4</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-5.4%</td>
<td>-12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Topeka (Abbott)</td>
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<td>81.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-19.2%</td>
<td>-12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Topeka (Scott)</td>
<td>4:29</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-16.0%</td>
<td>-12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (West)</td>
<td>0:2</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-6.8%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holliday Park (North)</td>
<td>2:28</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-25.7%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Topeka</td>
<td>0:3</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-6.6%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee Town</td>
<td>0:10</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-23.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward Meade</td>
<td>2:33</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-13.8%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Topeka (SE)</td>
<td>4:11</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-43.1%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highland Park (East)</td>
<td>2:11</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-10.2%</td>
<td>-11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highland Park (North)</td>
<td>5:8</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-3.4%</td>
<td>-3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Highland Park (West)</td>
<td>2:7</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-8.0%</td>
<td>-11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic North Topeka (North)</td>
<td>3:13</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-10.5%</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic North Topeka (South)</td>
<td>2:21</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-25.1%</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holliday Park (South)</td>
<td>1:12</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe</td>
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<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-32.2%</td>
<td>-3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Town (East)</td>
<td>0:17</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Town (West)</td>
<td>3:14</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-5.5%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorey</td>
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<td>58.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-5.6%</td>
<td>-4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East End</td>
<td>3:4</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-12.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (NE)</td>
<td>2:1</td>
<td>200.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-9.9%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hi-Crest (SE)</td>
<td>4:2</td>
<td>200.0%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>34.7%</td>
<td>15.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakland</td>
<td>2:2</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-8.5%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quinton Heights-Steele</td>
<td>2:3</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-4.0%</td>
<td>-3.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Stability Score Ranges & Stability Rating

< 1.8 - Rapidly Declining
1.8 - 2.2 - Declining
2.3 - 2.9 - Stable
> = 3.0 - Rising

(Draft) Neighborhood Element
01/18/2000
Neighborhood Revitalization Program Analysis

The Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) is a tax rebate program designed to encourage development activity within the Neighborhood Revitalization Area (NRA) (see Map #1). The stated goal of the program is to promote,

"the revitalization of the inner urban area of the City of Topeka through rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment."

The program offers a 95% rebate on any increase in property taxes as a result of property improvements. Both rehabilitation and new construction projects are eligible for residential, commercial and industrial properties within the NRA. An emphasis has been placed on encouraging residential development, as evidenced by a 5% minimum increase in property value required for residential projects as opposed to a 15% increase required for commercial and industrial projects. Furthermore, special provisions have been included which favor the preservation and construction of owner occupied single-family structures. Projects involving the construction of rental single-family structures or the conversion of existing single-family structures into two or more dwelling units are not eligible for the rebate. The renovation or construction of multiple-family dwellings are only eligible for a rebate if the project occurs within one of three smaller Designated Multi-Family Districts.

Is this program achieving its goal of promoting the revitalization of inner urban areas? Is the NRA too large to effectively target the "inner urban" area? Does the program create enough of an incentive to encourage development activity in the City's most distressed areas? The following analysis of the type and location of NRP projects will attempt to answer these questions.

NRP Project Locations

Of the 89 Census Block Groups which fall either partially or completely within the NRA, 24% have been classified as "Intensive Care", 35% as "At Risk", 33% as "Out Patient", and 9% as "Healthy" (see Table 1). More than ½ (57%) of the "Intensive Care" block groups had no residential NRP projects between 1995 and 1999 compared to 21% of "Out Patient" block groups with no residential activity. The remaining "Intensive Care" areas combined had only 24 (19%) residential NRP projects in that time period. "Out Patient" areas experienced the most residential NRP projects with a total of 53 projects, accounting for 42% of all residential NRP projects between 1995 and 1999. "At Risk" areas accounted for 34% of residential NRP projects, with 36% of "At Risk" block groups experiencing no residential NRP development activity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood Health Classification</th>
<th>Number of Residential NRP Projects</th>
<th>Number of Block Groups In NRA</th>
<th>Average Number of Residential NRP Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intensive Care</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At Risk</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out Patient</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 Residential NRP Project Locations: 1995-1999
NRP Project Types
While 1995 yielded the 2nd highest number of residential NRP projects, it had by far the lowest average project value and average project rebate, indicating that there were a large number of small projects with little or no new construction activity (see Table 2). This trend continued for the most part through 1996 and 1997. In 1998, with the construction of several large multi-family complexes, the average project value increased almost 4 times from the previous year to nearly $94,000. This trend seems to be continuing into 1999. Through June 30th, with only 19 residential NRP projects, the total residential project value has already surpassed the 1998 total and the average residential project value of $211,738 is more than double the 1998 average. This is largely attributable to one project, the Cottages of Topeka, an elderly multi-family complex built in North Topeka, which accounts for 80% of the $4,023,021 total residential NRP project value.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PROJECTS</th>
<th>TOTAL VALUE OF PROJECTS</th>
<th>AVERAGE PROJECT VALUE</th>
<th>TOTAL ESTIMATED TAX REBATE</th>
<th>AVERAGE PROJECT REBATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>$675,417</td>
<td>$18,255</td>
<td>$12,489</td>
<td>$338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$548,452</td>
<td>$30,470</td>
<td>$9,838</td>
<td>$547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>$263,985</td>
<td>$23,999</td>
<td>$4,695</td>
<td>$427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>$5,350,736</td>
<td>$93,873</td>
<td>$91,902</td>
<td>$1,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998*</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>$3,554,169</td>
<td>$65,818</td>
<td>$61,044</td>
<td>$1,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999*</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>$4,023,021</td>
<td>$211,738</td>
<td>$65,578</td>
<td>$3,451</td>
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</table>

Source: City of Topeka Planning and Neighborhood Development Department

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PROJECTS</th>
<th>TOTAL VALUE OF PROJECTS</th>
<th>AVERAGE PROJECT VALUE</th>
<th>TOTAL ESTIMATED TAX REBATE</th>
<th>AVERAGE PROJECT REBATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>$13,088,026</td>
<td>$545,334</td>
<td>$526,589</td>
<td>$21,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>$2,358,364</td>
<td>$131,020</td>
<td>$91,978</td>
<td>$5,110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>$37,283,192</td>
<td>$1,553,466</td>
<td>$1,440,081</td>
<td>$60,003</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$7,303,806</td>
<td>$365,190</td>
<td>$272,127</td>
<td>$13,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999*</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$6,027,225</td>
<td>$602,723</td>
<td>$213,586</td>
<td>$21,359</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*THROUGH JUNE 30, 1999.
Source: City of Topeka Planning and Neighborhood Development Department

However, the number of new construction projects seems to be on the rise. Although the percentage of residential NRP projects that involved new construction dropped slightly from 1996 to 1998 (see Table 4), the percentage midway through 1999 is at a 4-year high and that number appears to be rising. However, new construction projects still only account for 26% of all residential NRP projects since 1996.
Table 4
New Residential Construction NRP Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESIDENTIAL PROJECTS</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEW CONSTRUCTION</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCENT NEW CONSTRUCTION</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*through June 30, 1999

Source: City of Topeka Housing and Neighborhood Development Department

What Does All This Mean?

It is difficult to say whether the projects that participate in the NRP would have occurred in its absence. However, the number of residential NRP projects appears to be on the rise and an increasingly large percentage of those projects are new construction. But these projects do not appear to be concentrated in the areas with the most need. With disproportionately more residential projects occurring in “Out Patient” block groups than in “At Risk” or “Intensive Care” block groups, the program does not seem to be meeting its goal of encouraging revitalization efforts in economically distressed areas. The resulting “cherry picking” effect is a public policy dilemma.

While over half of the block groups in the NRA are classified as either “At Risk” or “Intensive Care”, the fact that 42% of the block groups are either “Out Patient” or “Healthy” indicates that the NRA boundaries need to be re-evaluated. While it remains to be seen if the NRP provides enough incentive to encourage development in “At Risk” or “Intensive Care” areas, a more targeted boundary would at least ensure that the program is not benefiting neighborhoods where stabilized market forces already drive new construction and rehabilitation projects.
Focus Group Meeting Comments

CDAC

♦ Rental Assistance should be low priority.
♦ Non-housing historic preservation should focus on brick streets, stone curbs etc.
♦ Will the CDBG and CIP monies be co-mingled?
♦ What is the CDAC's role?

Southeast Topeka

♦ Highland Park was annexed 50 years ago with the promise of sidewalks, curbs, etc. It never happened.
Children have to walk to school in the streets.

North Topeka


Housing and Real Estate Community Meeting

♦ Vacant lots are too spread out. Must do larger areas.
♦ Need for public subsidy due to low property values.
♦ The houses that replace vacant lots are often more costly than the people who want to live in the neighborhood can afford.
♦ Builders can't build houses for $40-50,000.
♦ No major banks offer 203K program.
♦ It is cheaper to fix up an old house than to build a new one.
♦ Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are not as much of an issue for people buying a house as much as predictability and compatibility. Infill housing is often not compatible with existing neighborhood character.
♦ Infrastructure (sewers, water lines) in old neighborhoods is often not compatible with modern plumbing. Will infrastructure support new infill? Need to ensure that it will.
♦ Relocation codes need to be eased up.
♦ Government needs to be development friendly.
♦ Synchronize economic development efforts with neighborhood investment (eg Oakland Expressway).

Southwest/West Topeka

♦ Transportation efforts should focus on public transportation.
♦ New suburban development has no community gathering spaces/parks.
♦ Subdivisions should promote interaction and be planned as a neighborhood.

East Topeka

♦ Eastgate Townhomes are in a outpatient neighborhood. Many single mothers. Drugs are prevalent. Should improve these townhomes to prevent entire area form declining.

Central Topeka

♦ If neighborhoods are going to support downtown, then downtown should support neighborhoods. Has DTI expressed any commitment to the neighborhoods?
♦ Need to improve communication with adjacent neighborhoods.
♦ If Downtown is City's neighborhood them how about a Downtown Focus Group?
♦ Neighborhood development spending should include public and private dollars.
♦ Rehabilitation should focus on renter as well as owner occupied houses.
♦ Should move houses for infill.
♦ Need for public/private land development agency.
Neighborhood Priority Survey Results

A draft version of this document was presented at seven "focus group" meetings held throughout the City. The purpose of the meetings was to give citizens a chance to review and comment on the document. In order to reach citizens in all areas of the city, meetings were held in the north, east, southeast, central and west/southwest parts of the city. Additional meetings were held with representatives of the real estate and housing community (including real estate agents, lending institutions and housing providers) and the CDAC. At each of the meetings survey forms (see below) were handed out and completed by all attendees in order to determine city-wide priorities in neighborhood development funding.

Survey participants were first asked to identify which of these two broad categories (housing and non-housing activities) should receive the highest priority in neighborhood development spending. Next, the survey participants were asked to identify the relative importance of specific housing and non-housing activities by distributing 10 points to the activities in each list.

Table 1 below summarizes the survey results. The table shows that a vast majority (69.4%) of the total points given to Broad Activities were allocated to housing activities, indicating that housing activities should be given greater importance when allocating neighborhood development monies. Table 1 shows the percent of the total points allocated to each housing and non-housing activity. Homeownership received the largest percentage of points (29%) under housing activities, while Infrastructure received the highest percentage of points (25%) under non-housing activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1 – Neighborhood Activity Survey Results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broad Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation – Substantial/Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Construction/In-fill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code Enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehabilitation – Minor/Emergency Repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Housing Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Youth Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks/Beautification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Capacity/Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Preservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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