SHAWNEE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 2001-215

CITY OF TOPEKA ORDINANCE NO. 17747

A JOINT SHAWNEE COUNTY RESOLUTION AND CITY OF TOPEKA ORDINANCE

introduced by Harry Felker 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 26th day of November, 2001;

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Topeka, Kansas, on this 13th
day of November, 2001;

Section 1. Chapter 7, Part J, of the Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive
Metropolitan Plan recognizes additional planning and community development issues
which require specific detailed area plans as part of the ongoing planning process for
those areas undergoing land use transition or evidencing the need for redevelopment.

Section 2. The Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan, a copy of which is attached
hereto and incorporated by reference as if fully set forth herein, provides long-range
guidance for the future growth and development of the area generally bounded by I-70
on the north, SW 6th Street to the south, SW Harrison Street to the east and SW
Washburn/Willow/Quinton to the west. The Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan sets forth
a 10-year vision with goals and strategies relating to land use, neighborhood character,
housing, crime/nuisance prevention, and circulation in a comprehensive manner that
recognizes the desire to increase the livability of the Ward-Meade neighborhood. The
Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan is representative of the collective input provided by
stakeholder organizations in the area, which include the Ward-Meade Neighborhood
Improvement Association.
Section 3. The Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan is hereby amended by the addition of the Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan as a separate Plan Element.

Section 4. 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

Mayor, Harry Felker

ATTEST:

City Clerk, Iris E. Walker

SHAWNEE COUNTY, KANSAS

Chairman, Vic Miller

Vice-Chairman, Marice A. Kane

Member, Theodore D. Ensley

ATTEST:

County Clerk, Cynthia A. Beck

RECEIVED

SEP 14 2001
Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan

An Element of the Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan 2025

Ward-Meade Neighborhood Improvement Association
Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department

ADOPTED:
Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, October 22, 2001
Topeka City Council, November 13, 2001
Shawnee County Board of Commissioners, November 26, 2001
Revised.
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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Background In August, 1996, the Ward-Meade (formerly Central) Neighborhood Improvement Association (NIA) was one of 11 different neighborhoods to submit a request to the Topeka-Shawnee Metropolitan County Planning Commission for “downzoning” of their neighborhood to a primarily single-family residential classification. In September of 1997, Topeka City Council passed a resolution directing the Planning Commission and staff to prepare the necessary studies, reports, and recommendations in response to this request. The City has completed 8 neighborhood downzonings and 5 neighborhood plans since the fall of 1997. In July of 2000, City Council adopted the Neighborhood Element of the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan 2025 identifying Ward-Meade as a high priority neighborhood for planning and funding assistance. Planning staff began working directly with the NIA in December of 2000.

Purpose The purpose of this document is to provide long-range guidance and clear direction to the City and its agencies, residents, and private/public interests for the future revitalization and development of the Ward-Meade neighborhood. The Plan should be fluid, not static. The scope of the Ward-Meade Neighborhood Plan comprehensively addresses land use, housing, neighborhood character, safety, circulation, and infrastructure issues. It establishes a 10-year vision with supportive goals, strategies and actions. This Plan provides the policy basis from which to identify appropriate zoning, capital improvements and other initiatives for implementation.

Relation to Other Plans The Plan is a comprehensive community-based approach to neighborhood planning that constitutes an amendment to the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan and is regularly monitored, reviewed, and updated as needed. It is consistent with the Neighborhood Element of the Comprehensive Plan which recommends a neighborhood plan for Ward-Meade be developed in the year 2001. Ward-Meade is rated primarily as an intensive care neighborhood in the Neighborhood Element and is considered a high priority for planning assistance and resource allocation.

Process (Refer to flow chart) This document has primarily been prepared in collaboration with the Ward-Meade NIA. Beginning in the fall of 2000 planning staff conducted a property-by-property land use/housing survey of the neighborhood and collected pertinent demographic data. The information was shared and presented during a
community workshop at Meadows School in December of 2000. Starting in February 2001, the NIA has devoted their monthly meetings to formulate the goals, guiding principles, strategies, and actions recommended in the Plan. Over the course of this 6-month period, attendance at the meetings has steadily increased to a point of 35 people per meeting. On August 18, the NIA held a second community workshop to formally review the Plan’s recommendations. All potentially affected property owners by zoning changes were notified of this meeting by Planning staff. On August 23, 2001 the NIA formally endorsed the Plan. Formal legal notices for re-zoning proposals were sent to affected property owners in late August at least 20 days prior to the September 24th Planning Commission hearing.

The Planning Commission deferred the Plan and zoning cases from September 24 to October 22 at which time they recommended approval of an amended Plan (pg. 17, definition of “Residential – Mixed Use”). Topeka City Council approved the Plan as amended on November 13, 2001. The Shawnee County Board of Commissioners approved the Plan as amended on November 26, 2001.
II. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

A. LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Setting The Ward-Meade Neighborhood under study is located just northwest of the State Capital building and Downtown Topeka. Ward-Meade is bounded by I-70 on the north, SW 6th Street on the south, SW Harrison Street to the east and SW Washburn/Willow/Quintin to the west. The neighborhood comprises about 280 acres.

Ward-Meade is a higher density residential area on extending from within the downtown area on its eastern edge. The character of the abutting areas to the west include two residential neighborhoods (Kenwood, Potwin), while the area to the north is hemmed in by I-70. The residential portions of Ward-Meade are generally hidden behind the mixed-use commercial frontages along 6th Street and Topeka Boulevard.

History As you walk through the Ward-Meade neighborhood, you see many of the properties that have made up the history of Topeka. The Hicks Block, Sargent House, St. Joseph's Church, Sumner School, and Ward-Meade mansion are the most prominent and are all
on the National Register of Historic Structures (see Map #7). Half of the neighborhood was part of Topeka’s Original Town Site in 1859 which came as far west as Western Avenue. The oldest subdivision in the neighborhood is Harvey’s Subdivision which was filed in 1847.

The neighborhood derives its name from the Ward-Meade mansion and park of the same name. In 1853, Government Blue Books list Mr. Ward as wagon maker with the Indian Agency here in Topeka. The deed signed by President Buchanan is still in the possession of the family. Jo-Jim (Kaw Indian) was jubilant over the $100 he received from Mr. Ward for his 240 acres of prime land that overlooked the Kansas (Kaw) River.

The Ward family farm was where pioneers crossing the Oregon Trail at the Kansas (Kaw) River could seek lodging and food for the night. Mary Jane Ward kept a candlelight burning in her windows to guide weary travelers to their doors. In 1854, the river crossing and Ward home became the reason for the founding of Topeka at its present day site. The Ward home began as three small log cabins perched neatly in a row on the brow of the hill. The exterior of the Victorian mansion, finished in the 1870s, was transformed to a gracious southern colonial-type reminiscent of the Meade ancestral home in Kentucky. The two six-inch square peepholes on either side of the chimney of the north wall are no longer needed as lookouts for stray Indians. Eventually, the ancestors of the Ward family sold off enough property for future development of the neighborhood surrounding it.

Ward-Meade neighborhood is also home to Sumner School. Originally, Sumner School was constructed in 1878 for African American students. It was named after Charles Sumner, the staunch advocate for little Sarah Roberts of Boston in 1849. After the first Sumner school was replaced in 1901, African-American children were relegated to lesser facilities and eventually the Monroe School across town. Sumner then became a school for white students. In 1951, the Supreme Court’s famous desegregation ruling involved both Monroe Elementary School and Sumner Elementary School. The lead plaintiff in the Brown v. Topeka Board of Education, Linda Brown, lived in the Ward-Meade neighborhood. The current school, constructed in 1936, was closed in 1995 as part of a consolidation to remedy the Brown v. Board of Education lawsuit. The new Meadows Elementary School is also in the neighborhood.

In 1963, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) finished I-70 Highway along the northern fringe of Ward-Meade. Twenty-six (26) lots were taken between the Kansas River and Ward-Meade for its development. Most of the lots in the neighborhood are 25’x150’.
B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

For purposes of this Plan, the neighborhood was broken down into four distinctive and cohesive geographic sub-areas—Meadows, Sumner, 5th-6th Street Corridor, and Downtown (see Map #1).

Health The Neighborhood Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes a neighborhood health rating system for all neighborhoods in Topeka to prioritize planning assistance and resource allocation. Most of Ward-Mead is designated as intensive care neighborhoods with the most seriously distressed conditions—and considered a high priority for re-investment due to the high revitalization potential of its historic character that is largely still intact. The northern section of the neighborhood (north of 2nd Street) is rated as out-patient signaling a much more stable environment and is considered an average priority for re-investment.

Land Use The neighborhood is predominately residential with 83% of all parcels and nearly 70% of all land area devoted to residential uses (see Table 1 and Map #2). 68% of all parcels are Single-Family Residential. Most single-family uses occur within the Sumner and Meadow sub-areas. Residential Two/Multi-Family, which represent former single-family homes that were converted to apartments, make up nearly one-fifth of the residential parcels. There are very few two or multi-family structures that were built intentionally for that use. Only a moderate number of parcels are Vacant (8%). As expected, land intensive Commercial parcels (including Light Industrial and Office) comprise more proportionate share of land area (17%) than they do with the number of parcels (7%). These land uses are primarily located in the 5th-6th Street Corridor and Downtown sub-areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Category</th>
<th>Parcels</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Single Family</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Two Family</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Multi Family</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential – Two/Multi Family</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking/Utilities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space (Parks)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industrial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1026</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>170.6</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right-of-way</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>109.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Area</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>280</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Dept. & Shawnee County Appraisers Office (2001)
Zoning patterns in the neighborhood have not appreciably changed since 1939. The interior of the neighborhood has consisted of two-family zoning west of Western Avenue and multi-family zoning east of Western Avenue. The existing zoning pattern (Map #3) shows this pattern continuing with the most intensive multi-family zoning (M-3 and M-2) occurring closest to Downtown and in the 5th-6th Street sub-area. The only single-family zoning occurs in a small portion of the Meadows sub-area north of 1st Street. The most intensive commercial zoning (C-4) covers all of 6th Street and Washburn Avenue, while some office/institutional zoning begins to show up on Topeka Boulevard and in the Downtown sub-area.

**Housing Density**

The housing density of 6.3 units/acre found in Ward-Meade can be credited to the high number of single family housing units on smaller lots in combination with many two/multi-family structures. 64% of the housing units in the neighborhood are single-family structures while two/multi-family structures account for only 28% of the housing units. If the neighborhood were built out under permitted zoning, the overall density would double to 12.6 units/acre. The potential build-out density greatly exceeds a traditional single-family neighborhood density range of 5-7 units per acre for low-density residential land uses and would transform major portions of Ward-Meade to a multi-family neighborhood.

### Table 2

**Housing Density – Ward-Meade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Units/Acre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Family</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>92.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two/Multi Family</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Net Density Residential** | 1079 | 100.0% | 116.1 | 9.3

**Net Density All** | 1079 | 170.6 | 6.3

**Gross Density (w/ ROW)** | 1079 | 280 | 3.9

*Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2001)*

### Table 3

**Housing Conditions – Ward-Meade**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Minor Deficiencies</th>
<th>Intermediate Deficiencies</th>
<th>Major Deficiencies</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prop.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Prop.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two/Multi Family</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>203</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2001)*
**Zoning**

Zoning patterns in the neighborhood have not appreciably changed since 1939. The interior of the neighborhood consists of two-family zoning west of Western Avenue and multi-family zoning east of Western Avenue. The existing zoning pattern (Map #3) shows this pattern continuing with the most intensive multi-family zoning (M-3 and M-2) occurring closest to Downtown and in the 5th-6th Street sub-area. The only single-family zoning occurs in a small portion of the Meadows sub-area north of 1st Street. The most intensive commercial zoning (C-4) covers all of 6th Street and Washburn Avenue, while some office/institutional zoning begins to show up on Topeka Boulevard and in the Downtown sub-area.

**Housing Density**

The housing density of 6.3 units/acre found in Ward-Mead is credited to the high number of single family housing units on smaller lots in combination with many two/multi-family structures. 64% of the housing units in the neighborhood are single-family structures while two/multi-family structures account for only 28% of the housing units. If the neighborhood were built out under permitted zoning, the overall density would double to 12.6 units/acre. The potential build-out density greatly exceeds a traditional single-family neighborhood density range of 5-7 units per acre for low-density residential land uses and would transform major portions of Ward-Mead to a multi-family neighborhood.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
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<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Density Residential</strong></td>
<td><strong>1079</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>116.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>9.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Density All</strong></td>
<td><strong>1079</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>170.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Density (w/ ROW)</strong></td>
<td><strong>1079</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0%</strong></td>
<td><strong>280</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2001)

**Table 3**

**Housing Conditions – Ward-Mead**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Minor Deficiencies</th>
<th>Intermediate Deficiencies</th>
<th>Major Deficiencies</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prop.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Prop.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Family</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>203</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2001)
Housing Conditions

Housing conditions in Ward-Meade feature a below average rating, with only slightly less than a fourth of residential structures having minor deficiencies, as seen in Table #3. Single-family structures exhibited the best conditions with roughly three times as many sound houses as converted single-family houses (two/multi-family). However, nearly half the single-family structures had at least one major structural deficiency (roof, foundation, etc.). Map #4 shows that housing conditions are most sound in the Meadows sub-area and generally declines fairly rapidly east of Taylor Street in the Sumner and Downtown sub-areas. The 5th-6th Street corridor that is prevalent with two/multi-family houses exhibited almost all major or intermediate deterioration.

Tenure

Ward-Meade has slightly more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied housing units (see Table #4). Single-family units are 56% are owner-occupied. The overall homeownership rate of 43% falls well below the city’s homeownership rate of 61%. Areas with the highest concentrations of homeownership also generally correspond to areas with high concentrations of single-family dwellings, as is illustrated by Map #5. The highest levels of owner occupancy can be found in the Meadows sub-area – only one block fell below 50% owner-occupancy. The lowest owner occupancy levels can be found in the Downtown sub-area.

The estimated vacancy level for the neighborhood is relatively moderate at 6% of all housing units and is lower than expected for single-family homes. Vacancy levels are particularly high in multi-family structures. Vacancy estimates are considered to be conservative because the survey was limited to the exterior of the structure.

Table 4
Housing Tenure – Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Types</th>
<th>Owner Occupied</th>
<th>Renter Occupied</th>
<th>Vacant</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Family</td>
<td>61 7.4%</td>
<td>62 76.5%</td>
<td>13 16.1%</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td>363 55.8%</td>
<td>289 38.8%</td>
<td>35 5.4%</td>
<td>687</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two/Multi Family</td>
<td>51 24%</td>
<td>150 70.4%</td>
<td>12 5.6%</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>53 3.3%</td>
<td>2 66.7%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>425 43%</td>
<td>511 51%</td>
<td>60 6.4%</td>
<td>996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2000)

Values and Age

According to data gathered by the Shawnee County Appraiser, the mean value of single-family homes is $26,606 which slightly higher than two/multi-family residences (see Table #5). The housing stock in Ward-Meade is relatively old. According to the 1990 census, approximately 46% of all housing in the neighborhood was built prior to 1940 and only 5% was built after 1985. While these older and larger houses are more costly to maintain, they contribute to the historic character of the neighborhood.
Table 5
Property Values – Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single-family</td>
<td>$23,700</td>
<td>$26,606</td>
<td>$184,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>$27,150</td>
<td>$33,018</td>
<td>$64,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two/Multi-family</td>
<td>$22,540</td>
<td>$25,347</td>
<td>$138,730</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-family</td>
<td>$12,300</td>
<td>$100,126</td>
<td>$212,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant Land</td>
<td>$780</td>
<td>$14,070</td>
<td>$44,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shawnee County Appraiser (2000)

Public Safety  Map #6 illustrates the number of reported major crimes committed by block according to crime statistics provided by the Topeka Police Department for 2000. Criminal activity was dispersed throughout the neighborhood. The highest concentrations of reported major crimes occurred on Polk and Tyler Streets between 3rd and 5th Streets in the Summer sub-area. The lowest number of crimes reported occurred in the blocks generally north of 2nd Street. Major crimes are defined as Part 1 crimes – murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and theft.

Development  Development activity in the 1990s has been limited entirely to demolitions. No building permits were issued for new construction during that time period. Building permits tracked are for new construction or whole demolitions and do not include rehabilitation or additions.

Circulation  As identified by the Topeka-Shawnee County Transportation Plan – 2015, the neighborhood contains two major arterials – 6th Street and Topeka Boulevard. This traffic does not normally disrupt residential blocks since it occurs on the perimeter of the area. The neighborhood does experiences their heaviest interior traffic on two collector streets – 4th and 5th Streets – which are one-way pairs designed to move commuter traffic in and out of Downtown by-passing 6th Street. Table 6 summarizes the annual average daily traffic (AADT) volumes for those intersections in the neighborhood that City reviews in respect to traffic volume. Ward-Meade is only serviced by one bus line running along 6th Street.

Table 6
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) – Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intersection</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>AADT</th>
<th>Accidents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willow &amp; Washburn</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>5590</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th &amp; Lane</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>2193</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th &amp; Topeka</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>3790</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th &amp; Topeka</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>4638</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka City Engineer (1994)
C. SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

Ward-Meade is located in part of Census Tract 6. Information from the 1990 U.S. Census are summarized in the tables below.

The neighborhood population declined by 18% during the 1990's. The largest decrease was seen in the 15-19 year old cohort, accounting for 6% of the population in 1990 as opposed to 9% in 1980. The 35-44 year old cohort, accounting for 8% of the 1980 population as opposed to 14% of the 1990 population experienced the largest increase in population. The number of households also decreased, while the average household size increased. The percentage of female headed households with a child under 18 years of age also increased, representing 35% of the households in 1990 as opposed to 25% of the households in 1980. Incomes in the neighborhood decreased in real terms during the 1990's. The number of persons below poverty level increased significantly, representing 24.7% of the population in 1990 compared to 15.3% in 1980.

As of 1990, the population can therefore be described as a declining population with larger household sizes, residing in an aging housing stock. It is an aging population with lower incomes, who are generally long-term residents of the neighborhood (more than 5 years). All of these factors may contribute to instability in the neighborhood unless "new blood" is found. The combination of high incomes, larger household sizes, aging housing, and the large percentage of short-term/renter households can lead to diminished housing conditions and homeowner investment.

Table 7
Population – Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POPULATION</td>
<td>2,613</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3,069</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1,332</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>1,632</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1,281</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>1,437</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>-11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2,138</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>2,596</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>-40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>180</td>
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<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>-41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34 years</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>565</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44 years</td>
<td>373</td>
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<td>246</td>
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<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and over</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>-39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td></td>
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1980 & 1990
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1980 & 1990
Table 8
Households — Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>1980</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLDS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>2,613</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>3,069</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>-15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W/ children &lt;18</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband: Wife</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-Headed (no husband)</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>-39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W/ children &lt;18</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>-42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Household</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Family</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau — 1980 & 1990

Table 9
Income and Work — Ward-Meade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990*</th>
<th>1980**</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCOMES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Median Income</td>
<td>$17,090</td>
<td>$19,611</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Median Income</td>
<td>$20,298</td>
<td>$23,512</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$9,139</td>
<td>$10,595</td>
<td>-14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below Poverty Level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Persons</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Children &lt;18</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons (16+ yrs.)</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
<td>51.7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduates</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau — 1980 & 1990

*1989 dollars
**1979 dollars converted to 1989 dollars
D. PROFILE SUMMARY

Conditions of the Ward-Meade Neighborhood tells a tale of two neighborhoods: (1) a stable western half primarily within the Meadows sub-area and (2) an unstable eastern half within most of the Sumner sub-area and all of the Downtown sub-area. Clearly, there are pockets of transition, and decline within its 280 acres that are impediments to re-investment:

Needs/Constraints
- 34.5% of the children under 18 live in poverty
- Over half the blocks in the Sumner sub-area show intermediate to major housing deterioration.
- The 5th-6th Street Corridor sub-area exhibits severe housing deterioration making for a very negative first impression into the neighborhood.
- Population is growing older and becoming more dependent on fixed-incomes (as of 1990).
- There are more renter-occupied housing units than owner-occupied housing units.
- Residential demolition permits outnumber new construction permits 32 to 0 from 1990-1998.
- Prostitution houses, while limited to a certain area, attract crime that spreads throughout the neighborhood and brings down property values.
- No neighborhood park space is allocated within the interior of the neighborhood to serve the nearly 3,000 residents.
- Historic Sumner School building is vacant.

On the other hand, there are many strengths and opportunities that can be seized upon to overcome these constraints and better address the neighborhood’s needs:

Strengths/Opportunities
- Diversity of land uses, population, housing, and proximity to downtown businesses typifies strength of traditional neighborhood.
- The neighborhood is anchored by several major destinations—Ward-Meade Park, Meadows School, and Downtown—that can attract outsiders to the area. Historic Sumner School will also be attracting future visitors as part of the Monroe School National Park Service site opening in 2003.
- Newly built Meadows Elementary School has become a major reason for new families to locate into the area attracting a higher percentage of out-of-district students.
- Historic turn-of-the-century housing stock is relatively intact leaving many “rough diamonds” for investment by new owners.
- Homeownership is very high within the Meadows sub-area with all but one block having more than 50% owner-occupancy.
- 64% of the housing units in the neighborhood are single-family structures.
- A concentration of churches and the YMCA provide community anchors and quality of life amenities for the neighborhood.
III. VISION AND GOALS

A VISION

In the year 2010, two visitors exit off of the new I-70/Topeka Boulevard interchange prompted by the signs for Historic Ward-Meade Park. They pass by new mid-rise office buildings and apartment houses on Topeka Boulevard and turn down 4th Street at the color-coordinated wayfinding sign. They notice the tastefully planted landscaping and decorative pedestrian lighting along this "clean" parkway which tells them they are likely at the center of a proud neighborhood.

Further west, they notice children on their way home from the renowned Meadows School stopping at the Sumner Neighborhood Center for award-winning after-school arts and humanities programs while mingling with tourists who have just arrived from Monroe School on the Linda Brown Trail. In the park outside, they see two elder statesmen engaged in a game of chess under the shade, a father playing frisbee with his daughter, and several mothers watching their toddlers get sprayed in the mini-water park. They overhear a couple making plans to go to the cyber ice-cream shop across the street after work.

They pass by the brick neighborhood entry markers and now know they are at the center of the "Ward-Meade Neighborhood". They turn north and drive slowly down the brick streets to gaze at the beautifully restored historic homes within the Ward-Meade Park and Sumner School Historic Districts taking note of all the people on their porches or in their front yards meeting with their neighbors.

Finally, they find the Ward-Meade Park parking lot and walk past an old schoolhouse, pharmacy, church, and general store on their way to tour the mansion and botanical gardens. After their tour, they pick up a neighborhood welcoming package which highlights all the goings-on in Ward-Meade. Then they look at each other and say, "Tell me again why I work at the State Capital and pay twice as much to live in west Lawrence?"
B. GOALS and GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LAND USE

Goal – Protect single-family residential land uses, as the predominate and intended land use of the neighborhood, and accommodate commercial, office, and multiple-family residential within established high intensity areas.

Guiding Principles

- Allow “corner store” commercial businesses compatible with a residential neighborhood that meets the needs of its residents and visitors.

- Increase neighborhood public park space so that it is more central and functional for all residents of Ward-Meade.

- Prohibit expansion of industrial uses into predominantly residential blocks.

- Adaptively re-use Sumner School as community space for youth, cultural, civic, and recreational activities.

- Preserve the viability of single-family residential blocks within a medium intensity environment.

- Discourage strip commercial development along Topeka Boulevard and 6th Street corridors.

HOUSING

Goal – Preserve and rehabilitate existing housing stock to the greatest extent possible.

Guiding Principles

- Increase overall homeownership levels by placing a high priority on assisting blocks to achieve greater than 50% owner-occupancy.

- Promote rehabilitation of existing housing with affordable housing programs without concentrating subsidized rental units; encourage rental units closer to employment areas and bus routes.

- Strive to maintain mix of housing to attract diversity of households (e.g. young singles, families w/ children, empty nesters, elderly, etc.)

- Ensure that new in-fill housing and rehabilitation of existing housing compliments traditional design/architecture of neighborhood.
- Identify strategic target blocks in each sub-area a primary housing improvement block in each sub-area
- Support development of new market-rate and affordable housing units to support Downtown work force in Downtown sub-area.

CIRCULATION

**Goal** - Make the neighborhood safer for pedestrians and bicyclists while facilitating movement of appropriate traffic through the neighborhood.

**Guiding Principles**

- Provide for safe pedestrian/bike circulation near school and park areas.
- Discourage “through” truck and car traffic from I-70 environs.
- Use signage to improve wayfinding to neighborhood and its attractions.
- Do not expand bus service on the interior of the neighborhood.
- Preserve existing grid street network and accessways to regional transportation network

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

**Goal** - Establish Ward-Meade as one of Topeka's premier traditional neighborhoods through the preservation, restoration, and promotion of its historical qualities.

**Guiding Principles**

- Ensure that new in-fill development and rehabilitation is consistent with traditional design/architecture of area.
- Work to maintain or re-build elements unique to Ward-Meade's traditional neighborhood design and heritage.
- Enhance gateway streetscapes to improve upon the neighborhood's “front door” corridors.
- Explore local/national historic district designations for a small contiguous area within the Sumner or Meadows sub-area that will help promote rehabilitation efforts.
- Market the neighborhood's assets year-round to outside visitors, tourists, and potential residents.
NUISANCE/CRIME PREVENTION

Goal – Create a safe, clean, and livable environment for all those in Ward-Meade to live, learn, work, and play.

Guiding Principles

- Mobilize volunteer resident resources to take a more organized and proactive role in crime/nuisance prevention.

- Promote educational efforts so residents are fully aware of “what to look for” in detecting and preventing crime.

- Eliminate prostitution activity in Ward-Meade and the indirect crime it attracts.

- Improve pedestrian lighting for better feeling of safety.

- Make “broken window” issues a top priority for enforcement to prevent future crime.
IV. LAND USE PLAN

The Ward-Meade Neighborhood planning area contains a fairly predictable pattern of land uses even though uses range from single-family residential to industrial uses. The Ward-Meade Land Use Plan (Map #8) graphically illustrates a conceptual guide for future development of the neighborhood that embodies the vision and goals presented in Section III. The map depicts preferred land use concepts and is explained more fully in the following descriptions below.

The following land uses, zoning districts, and densities are the "maximum recommended" and do not preclude lower-intensity land uses, zoning districts, or densities from being appropriate.

**Residential — Low Density (Urban):** This category comprises the single-family preserve areas of Ward-Meade that front on "local" low volume streets — Lane, Lincoln, Buchanan, Clay, Fillmore, Western, and Taylor — where the highest concentrations of single-family uses exist without a significant mixing of two/multiple-family uses or major frontage along arterial streets. These are areas whose original development was single-family and where a realistic potential exists to sustain this as the predominate character. New development in this area should be compatible with the existing single-family character, which could include such uses as churches and small-scale daycares. Having one of the higher densities of any single-family neighborhood, new uses should not exacerbate on-street parking congestion.

*Primary Uses:* single-family dwellings  
*Zoning Districts:* R-2 (Single Family)  
*Density:* 5-7 units/acre (net)

**Residential — Medium Density:** This category is applied to the blocks that have transitioned into a higher density residential area from a lower density single-family area. Within Ward-Meade, those streets would include Tyler and Polk Streets between 3rd and 5th Streets. These blocks may not meet the characteristics of a Residential-Low Density area, but still should retain a decisively residential character albeit at a more medium density (8-14 units/acre). This area acts as a buffer between the high intensity industrial/Downtown uses to the east and the low density single-family uses to the west. Tyler Street, due to its topography and proximity to Downtown/Topeka Boulevard, may include appropriately-scaled higher density dwellings. The purpose of this category is to allow medium density residential uses while protecting against the spread of higher density development into the single-family preserve areas.

*Primary Uses:* Single-family dwellings to four-unit dwellings  
*Zoning Districts:* "M-1A" (Limited Multiple-Family), "M-2" (Multiple-Family)  
*Density/Intensity:* 8-14 dwelling units/acre

**Residential — Mixed Use:** This category builds upon the Residential-Medium Density classification by allowing the introduction of neighborhood-scaled office, institutional, and commercial extensions from 6th Street within the same blocks as residential uses. Adaptive re-use of existing structures should be highly encouraged, but when not feasible, sensitivity
to screening, landscaping, parking, lighting, etc. should be incorporated into any new construction design so as to minimize impact on existing residential properties. Residential land use should be treated as the preferred land use and not be subjugated by non-residential uses. Non-residential uses are appropriate to serve expansions of 6th Street frontage property.

**Primary Uses:** Single to four-unit dwellings, neighborhood-scale commercial, office, and institutional

**Zoning Districts:** “M-1 A” (Limited Multiple-Family), “M-2” (Multiple-Family), X-1 (Mixed Use), PUD (Planned Unit Development-commercial or multi-family usage), C-1 (Commercial), O&I-1 (Office and Institutional)

**Density/Intensity:** 10-16 dwelling units/acre

**Commercial – Neighborhood:** This designation allows for small-scale “mom and pop” businesses within the interior of the neighborhood that would serve local needs of the neighborhood residents. Compatible uses may include antique shops, artist studio, delicatessen, coffee shop, professional offices, video sales, etc. All of the properties under this category contain existing commercial buildings and would be restricted from further expansion without meeting setback or parking requirements. These uses are intended to be an asset to a traditional neighborhood that can serve pedestrian convenience or live-work needs of the people that live nearby. They are not intended to attract a large number of non-local visitors.

**Primary Uses:** small-scale neighborhood commercial stores

**Zoning Districts:** C-1 (Commercial)

**Density/Intensity:** Low

**Commercial – Mixed Use:** This category would mirror the Residential-Mixed Use classification except that commercial land use would be the preferred land use instead of residential. Higher intensity residential uses would be permitted alongside commercial and office uses that all adhere to urban site planning standards. Since most of these blocks front 6th Street, a major image street, parking lots and open storage should be effectively screened from street frontages by possibly expanding into the Residential-Mixed Use areas or side streets (see above). Quality of design should be emphasized by orienting buildings close to the street, softening views where possible, restricting large pole signage, ensuring visual integrity along 6th Street, and buffering physical impacts from adjacent residential blocks. Adaptive re-use should be highly encouraged such as the converted office dwellings on Washburn. Current C-4 commercial zoning allows
high intensity uses that renders 6th Street to a life of strip retail and visual clutter if left unchecked. It would be the purpose of this classification to provide for a healthy combination of mixed uses along an aesthetically pleasing regional corridor that avoids future “strip commercial” characteristics.

**Primary Uses:** Mixed

**Zoning Districts:** X-1 (Mixed Use); C-2 or C-4 (Commercial); M-2 (Multi-Family)

**Density/Intensity:** Medium to High

**Downtown:** This designation recognizes the mixed use nature and higher intensity of the area east of Tyler Street and crossing over Topeka Boulevard. Topeka Boulevard, as described in the Downtown Topeka Redevelopment Plan, is envisioned to return as the classic urban “address” for office space and downtown dwellers alike. A planned interchange connection with I-70 within the next 15 years will create a much greater attraction for a Topeka Boulevard “address”. To that end, this classification should promote taller office buildings, new apartment/condominium houses, pedestrian-oriented retail, etc. as part of a high density mixed-use corridor that blends in restored historic turn-of-the-century homes (some adaptively re-used). Parking should be hidden from Topeka Boulevard and elegant streetscapes incorporated into this new gateway to Downtown. Design guidelines and performance standards should follow recommendations found with the Downtown Plan.

**Primary Uses:** mixed

**Zoning Districts:** Downtown Mixed Use (new)

**Density/Intensity:** High

**Industrial:** This designation recognizes both existing light and heavy industrial use types concentrated near the Interstate entrances/exits. Ideally, light industrial uses such as light manufacturing, assembly, distribution, processing, warehousing, etc. would be appropriate farther away from the neighborhood. Light industrial uses have long been established in the vicinity of I-70 and 1st Street on the periphery of the neighborhood. This designation does not support light industrial uses in the case of wholesale redevelopment or significant changes to the alignment of I-70 that alters the setting of this area.

**Primary Use:** light manufacturing, storage, assembly, processing, etc.

**Zoning District:** I-1 (Light Industrial)

**Intensity:** High

**Institutional:** This designation recognizes existing schools, churches, utilities, and off-site parking lots. Major expansion of existing churches or schools off-site is not anticipated nor recommended at this time. Limited expansion of institutional uses should be assessed accordingly. A potential community center within Sumner School is the only anticipated new institutional use.

**Primary Uses:** Schools, churches, etc.

**Zoning Districts:** primarily R-2 (Single-Family)

**Intensity:** Medium (limited occurrences)
**Open Space/Parks**: This designation represents existing (Ward-Meade Park and Giles Park) and future (Sumner School Park) park space. It recognizes that the development of these sites are reserved for public open space and should not be developed for non-park or non-public uses. It is anticipated that the block comprising the Sumner School Park site should accommodate any necessary future expansion needs of a community center or park. Expansion of Ward-Meade Park is envisioned to be limited to 1 or 2 single-family parcels on Fillmore as necessary for them to carry out their master plan. At this time, expansion beyond that is not seen as a benefit to the neighborhood because of the sound conditions of the historic homes that surround it.

**Primary Use**: Parks, Public Facilities

**Zoning District**: OS-1 (Open Space)

**Intensity**: Low
V. REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

A. Revitalization Principles

✓ "Reveal Thyself!" — The Ward-Meade neighborhood is one of the best kept secrets in Topeka. It is home to some of the greatest concentration of historic resources and major anchors of any neighborhood — Ward-Meade Park, Meadows Elementary School, Sumner School block, St. Joseph’s Church, Downtown. The neighborhood must find ways to promote its unique historic character while enhancing its livability to neutralize image and dis-investment problems generally associated with its perimeter.

✓ "Make an Impact" — Concentrate improvements in a 1-2 block area to create momentum and synergy. Build off other major investments (e.g., Meadows, future Sumner School re-use).

✓ "Take Ownership" — The NIA must champion the implementation of this Plan, take the lead on what happens in the neighborhood, re-energize its volunteer system, and provide clear direction/input to decision-makers on how to realize neighborhood goals. No greater impact will be felt than if the NIA can stay committed and organized to the Plan’s causes.

✓ "Sumner School Centerpiece" — The successful adaptive re-use of the historic Sumner School site for community/public use will be the most critical task for stabilizing the core of the neighborhood which finds itself at a transition. It’s impacts would be the most far-reaching of any one project implemented over the next 10 years and is the centerpiece of the area’s revitalization.

✓ "Housing and Livability” — see below

The most profound effect on the neighborhood’s health will be felt in its ability to address both the supply side (housing quality) and the demand side (neighborhood livability) of housing. Because of the historic character of so many of the homes and relative lack of vacant land, repair of the existing housing stock must be emphasized. To that end, several strategies are outlined below to support the housing goals and guiding principles of the Plan. However just as importantly, several non-housing strategies (e.g., community facilities, crime/nuisance prevention) will also follow later in this section that add value to the “demand” side of housing or the livability of the neighborhood.
B. Housing Strategies

**Target Blocks**
Targeting blocks for housing improvements is the first step in an overall housing strategy. The idea is to concentrate a critical mass of improvements in a 1-2 block area so that it stimulates additional investment by adjacent property owners, increases property values, and leaves behind a visible transformation of the area. Fixing houses in a randomly dispersed pattern only dilutes the impact upon the neighborhood and does not lead to any significant spin-off effect on the block or neighborhood. If the improvements are not visible or concentrated enough, then the stabilization of that 1-2 block area is marginalized and future investments to the area are not leveraged.

One of the major challenges to the revitalization of Ward-Meade is in revealing more of the “hidden treasures” in the neighborhood. Most of the best examples of renovated and well-maintained blocks of historic homes lie deepest in the neighborhood away from where most cars and outsiders travel. Likewise, there are several key destination points – Meadows School, Ward-Meade Park, Sumner School – that attract people from within and outside the neighborhood. Sub-area recommendations are as follows:

**Meadows Sub-Area/5th-6th Street Sub-Area**
*Destinations:* Meadows Elementary School and Ward-Meade Park  
*Key Improvement Routes:* Clay Street, Fillmore Street  
*Key Improvement Blocks:* 400-500 blocks of Clay; 500 block of Fillmore

This area is comprised of the most stable blocks of the neighborhood. The key improvement blocks represent those blocks that achieved an “intermediate deterioration” or “major deterioration” for housing conditions and have less than 50% homeownership along key routes. These blocks are on routes that visitors pass through daily to get to the key destination points and make a poor first impression of the neighborhood. Very stable areas generally surround the key improvement blocks and destinations. This provides the sort of environment where short-term results can be achieved with some intervention. The 400-500 blocks of Buchanan could also be looked at as an alternative.

**Sumner Sub-Area/5th-6th Street Sub-Area**
*Destinations:* Sumner School site  
*Key Improvement Routes:* Western Street, Taylor Street, 4th Street  
*Key Improvement Blocks:* 200-300 blocks of Western; 200-400 blocks of Taylor; 600-700 blocks of 4th Street

While the re-use of Sumner School as a community center/park is not a reality right now, it is acting as a key anchor in a transitional part of the sub-area. The fact that it is a National Historic Landmark that will be part of the Brown vs. Board of Education “story” attracting thousands of visitors to the city by 2003 is reason enough to target housing improvements in the surrounding blocks on Western and Taylor. The key improvement blocks represent those blocks that achieved an “intermediate deterioration” or “major deterioration” for housing conditions and have less than 50% homeownership along key routes. The only exception to this is the 300 block of Taylor where homeownership exceeds 70%, but in-fill potential exists. These blocks are on routes that visitors will likely pass through daily to get to the Sumner School site and need to make a better impression. Stable areas generally do not
surround the key improvement blocks as conditions severely deteriorate to the east. This provides the sort of environment where long-term results can only be achieved with some major intervention. The key to inducing housing and homeowner investment in these blocks will ultimately rest with successful re-use of the Sumner School site and significant reduction in crime (real and perceived).

Downtown Sub-Area
Destinations: Downtown employment, St. Josephs Church
Key Improvement Routes: Topeka Boulevard
Key Improvement Blocks: blocks surrounding St. Josephs Church

Housing is not prominent along Topeka Boulevard and therefore does not present an immediate opportunity for improvement. The long-term interest of this area is to provide for new in-town high-density mixed-use housing options that take advantage of future access to I-70 from Topeka Boulevard and that may extend back onto Tyler Street. High-end market rate units should be emphasized Downtown for the growing number of empty-nester, young professional, and kid-free households. Tyler Street, with the exception of the 500 block anchored by the Hicks Block apartment houses, has serious impediments to any significant housing investment short of a clearance program for redevelopment. The blocks surrounding St. Josephs Church is the last vestige of a housing enclave that could be targeted.

Affordable Housing Incentives
Once specific blocks are targeted for improvement, what type of improvements would be appropriate? The primary approach for Ward-Meade should be through rehabilitation of existing housing. Except where indicated, the housing stock is of unique character and vacant lots are few to warrant any great emphasis on new construction of in-fill housing. Several approaches to affordable housing are available for property owners to stimulate renovation of the existing housing supply.

Rehabilitation
• Non-Profits – Cornerstone operates a lease purchase program for households who demonstrate an interest and ability in becoming future homeowners. Low/moderate-income families are placed in rehabilitated single-family units and gain necessary credit-worthiness in a couple of years to eventually become homeowners. Cornerstone funds rehabilitation of the property and manages it until they are ready. Topeka City Homes currently renovates and manages single-family rental units. These programs should be targeted on the key improvement blocks using a scattered-site approach.

• City-Sponsored – The City of Topeka in cooperation with Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc (HCCI) and participating lenders offer the TOTO II (Topeka Opportunity to Own) program for new homebuyers. Program restrictions in the past limited use of the program in Ward-Meade so that 0 homes were rehabbed in the "intensive care" blocks since 1991. The TOTO II program now offers up to $65,000 for acquisition and rehab including a $5,000 weatherization allowance for low/moderate-income homebuyer renovations in Ward-Meade. These added incentives should enable more homebuyers to utilize the program in Ward-Meade's larger, older, and needier homes. Other rehab incentives offered to income eligible homeowners by the City's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department include forgivable loans for major rehab, emergency repair, and accessibility modifications. These programs should be targeted on the key improvement blocks.
• **Volunteers** — Prolonging the life of turn-of-the-century housing doesn’t always need to involve major restoration. Many of the homes are in decent enough shape, but their owners may have fallen behind in preventive maintenance such as painting, drainage (gutters), porches, etc. that can really extend the life/look of a house and avoid costly major repairs in the future. These simpler yet critical home improvement needs can be easily met by a dedicated group of volunteers. It is recommended that the NIA seek sponsorship to help organize volunteer rehab “parties” each year that will assist 2-3 elderly homeowners. They also could utilize existing volunteer rehab programs like Christmas in April to accomplish the same purpose. These initiatives may or may not be targeted on the key improvement blocks.

**New Construction**

• **Infill Housing** — If any new in-fill housing is going to take place, the most likely areas are in the 5th-6th Street corridor where most of the neighborhood’s vacant lots and deteriorated homes co-exist. Cornerstone currently has concentrated 9 units of their transitional and extended-stay housing program in the 500 block of Fillmore. New construction of a 4-unit extended-stay housing structure on Fillmore Street is also planned for that should fit the design character of the neighborhood. It is recommended that future infill opportunities by Cornerstone involve replacement of structures on Fillmore or infill of vacant lots in the 500 block of Clay Street mixed with new units for homeownership.

Each of these programs should be focused on improving those target blocks as described for each sub-area. If funding is going to be used to rehabilitate properties, it can be done with these target blocks as a priority.
C. Livability Strategies

Several strategies can be utilized that add significant value to the "demand-side" of the neighborhood. The quality of housing stock is but one facet of Ward-Meade's re-investment strategy. Non-housing strategies related to neighborhood character, infrastructure, community facilities, appearance, and safety are critical in creating an overall environment of livability emphasizing a traditional neighborhood quality of life. Specific livability strategies are outlined below.

Neighborhood Character
Preservation and restoration of the housing stock in Ward-Meade is a high priority to maintain a competitive advantage for housing demand. Promoting the historic character of the neighborhood is a major guiding principle of revitalization. Five structures in Ward-Meade are currently on the National Register and several other areas should be more fully explored for preservation and restoration incentives. Neighborhood character is separated into two levels of discussion:

- Design Guidelines vs. Historic Preservation

Design Guidelines - While rehabilitation and some infill investment is necessary to upgrade the conditions of the housing stock, their design will be a vital piece in the retention and promotion of Ward-Meade's traditional neighborhood character. Education and promotion of good design that fits Ward-Meade for both new and rehabilitated homes is critical to their increased attraction and property values.

A set of design guidelines are important to ensure that new houses and rehabilitation of existing houses are comparable to the integrity of the original houses in size, scale, form, and detail so that they fit well with their surroundings. An insensitive exterior rehabilitation is as much a detraction from the neighborhood's value as a neglected yet intact historic house. Inherent historic features of the existing housing stock should dictate such guidelines. The following are examples of design characteristics found in the Ward-Meade neighborhood (good and bad):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prairie/Craftsman (1900-20)</td>
<td>• High pitched roof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Front porch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rear yard vehicle access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Stone or brick column bases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Raised stone or brick foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Horizontal lap siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Extended eaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Flattened gable roof edges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proportionate window sizes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Victorian (1870-1910)</td>
<td>• Missing porch, spindlework detailing, and brackets under eaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High pitched roof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Horizontal lap siding and possible stick work covered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 20' max setback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Narrow front, deep back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Garage in back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk Victorian (1870-1910)</td>
<td>• Front porch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Wide base wood porch supports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Raised foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple roof lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trim detailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bay windows</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victorian Queen Anne (1880-1910)</td>
<td>• Front porch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Textured shingle siding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Raised foundation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Multiple roof lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trim detailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Detailed spindlework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The four most important design features of a traditional design would include raised foundations, trim detailing, proportionate window openings, and pitch of the roof. The following examples are types of new housing that fit the design guidelines for Ward-Meade. These examples are to be used as a guide and do not necessarily reflect specifically the types of homes that should be built in the neighborhood.
Single-family homes

Detached

Attached

How do design guidelines work? They can have various applications involving either voluntary compliance, mandatory compliance, or as an incentive. Some possible applications are discussed below:

- **Technical Assistance/Rehab Manual** — Most basic in their application, design guidelines educate and assist property owners in understanding historically appropriate design that will ultimately increase the value of their property and neighborhood. Most insensitive rehabilitation jobs are done due to lack of knowledge of appropriate methods or materials on older homes. Good design does not necessarily equate to higher renovation costs. For example, some old home renovations replace original sash cord windows with smaller windows never thinking that they could save money through replacement of sash cords, weather-stripping, glazing, and insulation around window frames (all do-it-yourself-type jobs). Attention to historic details almost always equates to higher re-sale values.

- **Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) Overlay Zoning District** — Implementation of a TND overlay zoning district would be applied primarily to new construction of infill development to ensure it blends in with the surrounding homes. A TND district would require the massing, orientation, setbacks, form, access, etc. be consistent for new construction with what is already in the neighborhood which is enforced through the building permit process. A TND district could also permit other types of traditional development like an accessory dwelling unit that is subordinate in size and nature to the single-family house (e.g., garlow, granny flat, above garage, attic, basement, etc.) intended for extended families or to subsidize larger house improvements. New or rehabilitated commercial buildings could also take on
the look of a house so that structure has flexible use depending on the tenants yet it still blends in with the surrounding character (see picture on right).

- **Residential Façade Improvement Program** - As an added financial incentive, a program could be created that matches dollar for dollar exterior renovations of older homes to be consistent with the City's adopted design guidelines. Patterned after the City's commercial storefront façade program, free design assistance could be combined with rehab match grants up to $5,000 to encourage an owner go the extra step towards sensitive design.

- **Historic Districts** - Design guidelines may also be used as part of a designated historic district (see Historic Preservation below).

- **Neighborhood Revitalization Program** - The City offers tax rebates for home improvements that increase the value of the property by more than 5%. They currently show no preference to design consistent or inconsistent with design guidelines. Greater tax rebate rewards should be given to those who tie their improvements to the design guidelines.

**Historic Preservation** - In addition to taking greater pride in neighborhood's history, establishment of a state/national district adds various incentives for housing rehabilitation. Historic districts have been proven to increase property values through maintaining the architectural integrity of a significant grouping of historic structures. Economic incentives in the way of federal/state income tax credits help stimulate investment in restoration. Recent legislation approved by the state establishes a state income tax credit on 25% of the qualified costs (minimum $5,000) on improving an historic structure or contributing structure within an historic district. If it costs $20,000 to rehab consistent with preservation guidelines, a $5,000 credit can be taken on your state income taxes. A federal tax credit program also works in a similar fashion except it is only applied to income-producing properties. Districts would need to be surveyed, inventoried, and approved by a large majority of the property owners within its boundaries. Two potential districts could include:

- **Sumner School Historic District** - The houses in the blocks surrounding Sumner School already fall under state historic review because it is a National Register building. However, those same homes are not eligible for the tax credit financial incentives since they are not in an historic district. The integrity of the homes is relatively intact, but are falling under more disrepair. This could be an added incentive to help spur rehabilitation.

- **Ward-Meade Park Historic District** - The same situation exists for the houses in the blocks surrounding Ward-Meade Park. This district could also come down as far as 3rd Street near another National Register structure – the John Sargent House in the 200 block of Clay Street – where housing conditions are predominantly sound.
Parks and Open Space

Currently, the Ward-Meade neighborhood has serious deficiencies in their access to neighborhood parks/green space and a community center. The 0.75-acre Giles Park, located at the neighborhood's northern fringe within a right-of-way of an I-70 off-ramp and the Meadows Elementary playground located at the neighborhood's western edge serve as Ward-Meade's only neighborhood park space. Both are ill-suited for the neighborhood's 3,000 residents because of their location, size, and function. Due to the expansion at Meadows School for a multi-purpose room, the neighborhood will soon be devoid of any green space to have organized/unorganized outdoor recreation. They will also still be devoid of any passive green open space in the middle of such a dense urban environment. Ironically, the name of the neighborhood is derived from Ward-Meade Park which serves as regional historic park for cultural events but not associated with recreation. It is also located on the northern edge of the neighborhood. The closest community center is the Central Park Community Center serving the southern portion of Central Topeka nearly 1 mile away.

The lack of any sufficient centralized green space or community center serving northern Central Topeka makes the transformation of the Sumner School block into a community center/neighborhood park a critical need for the livability of this area. Already a National Historic Landmark, Sumner School is a focus of the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision and its continued preservation will help attract thousands of visitors each year who come to Topeka to visit the Monroe School National Park site beginning in 2003.

Beyond historic preservation and tourism, the value to the local community is as a place for cultural, civic, and recreational functions. The 32,000 square foot (+ basement) 3-story former elementary school built in 1936 houses a an art deco auditorium in need of conversion/restoration for community performing arts groups. A basketball/recreation gym would need to be added on at a later date. The second story can accommodate office space possibly for City of Topeka employees. The first floor could be transformed into meeting space, non-profit offices, youth arcade rooms, computer rooms, youth programs, community police station, etc. where the public would be more accessible. The basement, or former cafeteria, could also be programmed for use.

It appears that a high priority should be placed on the community center and park space for youth activities that compliment student needs of Meadows Elementary School. Most disadvantaged kids that attend Meadows will pass by Sumner School to and from Meadows. Having a place to go after-school as well as in the summer should minimize “hanging-out” and build constructive relationships for educational/recreational enrichment. The restored auditorium could be the basis to create an arts and humanities theme in the center.

The aforementioned Historic Ward-Meade Park is a regional asset that attracts visitors from outside Topeka. Attractions at the City-owned 6-acre park include a 19th Century prairie town depicting the history of Topeka, the Ward-Meade Victorian mansion home, and a 2.5 acre botanical garden. Musical and cultural events are held year-round including the Park’s signature fall event, the Apple Festival. A key element of the neighborhood’s livability strategy is to market and enhance Ward-
Meade Park as a successful destination for people outside the immediate area. It is a free advertisement for the neighborhood and an on-going reciprocating relationship in which the park helps to sell the neighborhood and the neighborhood helps to sell the park. Future initiatives for the park should include at a minimum:

- Completion of rod-iron fencing around the botanical garden and added lighting for security
- Addition of period buildings to the Prairie Crossings
- Transformation of on-site parking lot into Prairie Crossing or green space.
- Renovation of adjacent house for security/caretaker presence.
- Continuation of Pioneer Summer Program for kids and more shared curriculum with schools
- Improved space for the preservation of artifacts, including an on-site curator
- Infrastructure upgrades to mansion and period buildings
- Removal of fencing and/or addition of lighting for security in off-site parking lot

**Circulation/Infrastructure**

Ward-Meade is comprised of several east-west streets - 4th Street, 5th Street, 6th Street - that move sizeable volumes of commuter traffic at peak hours. These patterns do not necessarily detract from the livability of the neighborhood as much as through truck traffic on a residential local street. Currently, the 1st Street exit off of I-70 encourages trucks and other vehicles to cut down Taylor Street to an east-west route. The long-term solution to this problem is to ultimately close the 1st Street exit and construct a new interchange at Topeka Boulevard and I-70. The new interchange will also alleviate the confusing and damaging routes on Tyler Street to get to I-70 or the Topeka Boulevard Bridge. Finally, a new interchange will make Ward-Meade (and its attractions) a convenient access point off of I-70 instead of having to go through Downtown. Shorter-term solutions to the cut-through traffic on Taylor could be to install traffic calming devices that would discourage left-hand turns of large trucks from 1st Street onto Taylor.

This Plan recommends maintaining the existing grid network including the ultimate replacement of the Topeka Boulevard Bridge as a vital link in the region’s transportation system. Ward-Meade should retain its link to North Topeka businesses. As described above, a new bridge should also be developed as part of a new interchange at Topeka Boulevard. The interchange should minimize acquisition of homes for right-of-way. "Cul-de-sacs" of streets is not supported for any reason since this would exacerbate traffic problems somewhere else in the neighborhood. After other higher priority livability issues are addressed, the one-way pair - 4th and 5th Streets - that connects to Downtown should also be assessed on a system-wide basis.

The most emotional circulation issue concerns the 15-minute daily stampede of cars in and around Meadows Elementary School during the school year. Safety concerns abound as parents park on both sides of the street, in alleys, and the street to pick-up their child when school lets out at 3:30. These concerns are similar in nature to other schools within urban neighborhoods. Late in the school year, school officials at Meadows implemented an enforcement initiative that ticketed cars for illegal parking. This should be part of an on-going program to raise parents’ awareness of the parking concerns and alert them to safe/legal methods of parking. Residents of 2nd Street and Clay Street should also be part of the awareness program as some cars continually ignore “no parking” signs during 3:00-4:00 p.m. Finally, traffic engineering can be part of the solution by preserving brick streets for slowing down cars, and improving pedestrian crossings by creating bump-outs at corners around the school and permanent in-lay crosswalks in the brick streets instead of painted crosswalks that wash off.
Lastly, to help uncover assets for visitors and locals to find, the neighborhood should work with local officials on including Ward-Meade Park, Sumner School, and St. Joseph's Church as part of a local wayfinding program which includes highly visible signage on and off the highway.

**Beautification/Image**

As mentioned earlier, a sizeable number of vehicles travel through the neighborhood each day going to/from work in Downtown and going to/from school at Meadows Elementary. The reality of these travel patterns present a double-edge sword for the neighborhood's image—do these routes offer a welcoming or undesired impression for visitors? For residents? Continual negative or positive reinforcement of images has strong impact on a person's quality of life decisions. One recommended way to increase the positive reinforcement of a welcoming image is to target streetscape and home improvements along the busiest internal corridors—4th and 5th Streets. 6th Street is not really appropriate as a desirable front door for Ward-Meade. Even though some streetscape work was done on 6th Street in the early 1990s, the overall image of mostly strip commercial development is not overly pleasant or reflective of the neighborhood behind it. Several options to be considered for enhancing the image and historic character of the neighborhood include:

- **4th Street Streetscape**—uniform landscaping, flowering tree plantings, perennial grass cover on corners, new sidewalk ramps, repaired cement/brick sidewalks, decorative pedestrian lighting, trash receptacles, removal of weeds, repair/demolition of housing along corridor. Pedestrian lighting should be spaced at 75' which would typically put 2 lights per block (150' from alley to street) per street side.

- **Neighborhood Signage – Central Approach**—Employ a centralized signage approach instead of a gateway approach. Use a central intersection to place signage on all four corners angled towards the intersection. Location options include 4th/Western (in front of Sumner) or 4th/Clay (on the way to Ward-Meade Park and Meadows). 4th/Fillmore already has church sign on corner, but could be an option.

- **Neighborhood Signage – Gateway Approach**—Employ a gateway signage approach instead of a centralized approach. Use a “gateway” to place signage on one or two corners angled towards the intersection. Location options include 4th/Topeka, 5th/Clay, 5th/Fillmore, 5th/Lane, 1st/Taylor, or 5th/Washburn.

- **Brick streets/sidewalks**—Removal of asphalt and restoration of bricks streets along key improvement routes (Fillmore, Clay). Brick sidewalks should be restored along key improvement routes and around historic structures or future districts. ADA ramps should include brick inlays.
Nuisance/Crime Prevention

Ward-Meade's image is constantly undermined in the media and community by its association with criminal activity in the southeastern portions of the community. This is a negative connotation on the way the "market" views the area lessening demand for housing throughout Ward-Meade. Likewise, pervasive nuisance complaints about junk in the yard, weeds, dangerous housing, animal control, etc. and the lack of their enforcement hits closer to home to all residents even in less crime heavy areas. Known as the "broken window" effect, nuisance violations have a direct correlation to where more serious crime will follow. Not fixing eyesores today will cost everybody tomorrow. Some strategies to improving upon nuisance and crime prevention include:

- **Prostitution House Elimination** - Public safety trends indicate that there is a prevalence of major crimes being reported in the southeast corner (Polk, Tyler) of the neighborhood. The blocks in and around this area also exhibit intermediate to major housing deterioration and very low levels of homeownership. The prostitution houses in this area are believed to be the prime source of the crime that follows this activity. Before any serious housing investments can be expected, a determined effort to rid the area of prostitution is necessary. (see "Key Actions" below)

- **Volunteer Resources** – "Neighbor to neighbor" initiatives should be started to help owners/residents comply with housing or nuisance codes. This would mainly apply to those owners/residents who are elderly or disabled, or unclear ownership situations. Volunteers could do things such as lawn mowing and cleaning up vacant lots. Re-starting the alley/neighborhood clean-ups by the NIA is also vital to avoiding environmental code violations. Likewise, developing a working relationship with the code inspectors for the area and prioritizing complaints for them would help once there is a violation.

- **Education** – Creating a non-threatening educational campaign for owners/residents on nuisance and housing codes by the neighborhood is an essential part of prevention. Educational efforts by community police officers to the neighborhood on items such as what to look for in a meth lab, drug house, etc. as well as crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) issues that discourage crimes. These educational efforts could be promoted through the NIA meetings, separate workshops, or ride-a-longs. The police currently have a CPTED property survey they offer free of charge for anyone who wants it.

- **Lighting** – Crime is least likely to happen in an area that is under "surveillance". Well-lit sidewalk, alleys, and public areas are not only discourage criminals, but they also encourage more activity at night by regular residents who walk or use community facilities which in turn also discourages criminal activity. Primarily, street intersections are lighted, but mid-block pedestrian paths, alleys and areas around parks, schools, churches, etc. should also be emphasized for increased lighting.

Marketing

Keys to successfully marketing a neighborhood's assets lie within implementing many of the above strategies already mentioned. However, once you have assets or potential assets to show off, you still have to let others know about it. The easiest way to get started is making sure that the neighborhood is helping in any way possible to support existing attractions of the neighborhood –
Ward-Meade Park, Meadows School, Sumner School, St. Joseph's Church, historic properties. These assets draw people into and through Ward-Meade and are a natural marketing point. Events like the Apple Festival and school carnivals also help market the area. Some things the NIA could promote to help market the neighborhood include:

- Continued support of the Apple Festival.
- Developing a welcoming packages for realtors and new residents
- Having greater partnerships ventures between Meadows and Ward-Meade Park
- Holding historic walking tours/brochures
- Starting a holiday home/garden tour (also as a potential fund raiser) in conjunction with Ward-Meade Park mansion and botanical gardens.
- Having block parties or neighborhood socials
- Maintaining an effective and visible NIA
V. IMPLEMENTATION

The purpose of this section is to provide a “framework for action” that outlines how the vision, goals, policies, and land use recommendations can be realized over the next ten years. It should be used by stakeholders and decision-makers to guide the next steps of the neighborhood revitalization process in terms of priorities, responsibilities, and feasibility.

A. Key Action Schedule

The community was surveyed at the August 18, 2001 workshop to determine their priorities for implementing specific strategies and actions of this plan. The actions below are a summary of actions to implement strategies discussed under the land use and revitalization sections of the Plan. They are not inclusive of all potential actions, but a checklist of some of the major actions that should be done. The actions are listed in order of highest to lowest point totals.

Priority “A” Activities (Address these before others)

✓ “Downzone” single-family areas from multi-family zoning (M-1, M-2) to single-family zoning (R-2)
  Development policies of the Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan are legally implemented through the practice of zoning to reflect the desired land use and intensity patterns for an area. As documented in this plan, higher intensity zoning districts established more than a half-century ago are at the root of many problems facing Ward-Meade today. The NIA recognized this issue in 1996 when they petitioned the Metropolitan Planning Commission to “downzone” their neighborhood to single-family residential. The Land Use Plan contained herein should be used as the guide to a neighborhood-wide re-zoning as initiated by the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Map #9 illustrates the specific zoning districts (per the Land Use Plan) that would be applied to properties. It is recommended that the Planning Commission’s re-zoning apply the lowest zoning district contemplated under the Land Use Plan to protect the neighborhood from insensitive higher intensity development. Changes to a higher intensity zoning district should be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine their consistency with the Plan’s goals.
  Who: Topeka- Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission; City Council
  When: Fall, 2001

✓ Undertake a feasibility and design study of the Sumner School property for potential use as a community center, office space, and surrounding neighborhood park space. City Council approved an application by the NIA for $50,000 to fund a feasibility study in August, 2001. The Parks and Recreation Department should work very closely with the NIA/residents to select a consultant and determine the most appropriate use for the space. Once the cost and use of the site is deemed to be acceptable, the Parks Department should take the lead to request funding for acquisition and development of the site from the Library upon their vacation expected in mid-2002. The State Historical Society has awarded the City a matching grant for Sumner’s acquisition of which the
City's anticipated portion would be $21,000. To be eligible, the grant must be used by fall of 2002. Cost for developing the site should be included in the City's Capital Improvement Program for 2003.

Who: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission; City Council

✓ Increase pedestrian and property lighting by either starting “front porch” lighting campaign or petitioning utility company for mid-block street lighting. Target areas that show high crime indicators.
Who: Ward-Meade NIA

✓ Explore historic district designations around Sumner School and Ward-Meade Park. A historic resource inventory should be completed to assess the viability of these areas for local or national historic district designation. The survey itself would help create a greater awareness of the historic assets in these areas thus generating even more interest to live in the area.
Who: Landmarks Commission

✓ Lobby City Council to pass “Loitering for Prostitution” law.
Who: Police, Ward-Meade NIA, City Council

✓ Have neighborhood forums with residents, landlords, and police officers to deal with prostitution houses.
Who: Police, Ward-Meade NIA, Landlords, City Council

✓ Address vacant houses (e.g., Work with non-profit affordable housing programs to target key improvement blocks)
“Addressing vacant houses” will be a result of a variety of non-direct actions that make the neighborhood more liveable. Most of the actions listed here will benefit the reduction of vacant houses. To move forward and address specific houses will likely require working with Cornerstone, TOTO program, or other housing non-profits to target specific houses for their programs.
Who: Housing non-profits (e.g., Cornerstone), Ward-Meade NIA

✓ Rezone 6th Street corridor to promote mixed uses and better design.
See first action above.
Who: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission; City Council
When: Fall, 2001

✓ Adopt traditional design overlay zoning district.
This will likely be done in conjunction with all traditional neighborhoods during development of the unified development code by Metro Planning staff.
Who: Metro Planning, Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission; City Council
When: Spring-Summer, 2002
Priority "B" Activities (Secondary but still can be worked on)

✓ Create voluntary “neighbor-to-neighbor” rehab programs
  Who: Ward-Meade NIA, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Christmas in April

✓ Make Ward-Meade Park parking lot more visible to passersby (lower/remove fence in front setback).
  Who: Parks and Recreation

✓ Provide design guideline manual to residents and businesses.
  This could likely be done in conjunction with other traditional neighborhoods by the architectural/historic preservation community.
  Who: Historic Topeka, Inc.; Landmarks Commission

✓ Create residential façade improvement program.
  The Landmarks Commission has applied for $30,000 of CDBG funds to begin such a program in the year 2002. The program should be marketed to existing or potential historic district areas and buildings.
  Who: Landmarks Commission
  When: 2002

✓ Install neighborhood signs/markers at gateways into neighborhood.
  The NIA should finalize the location and design concept with an appropriate sign/installation company as referred to in this plan and submit to Metro Planning for the City’s review and approval. Likely funding must either be applied for during the Consolidated Plan RFP process or raised privately.
  Who: Ward-Meade NIA
  When: 2003

✓ Restore brick streets along key routes to Ward-Meade Park entry.
  The NIA must contact the Public Works Department to initiate brick street restoration work during their next available time frame. The labor is provided by the Bureau of Correction’s female prisoners in East Topeka.
  Who: Public Works
  When: 2003

✓ Install ramps, permanent crosswalks, and corner bump-outs around Meadows School; continue enforcement of parking signs.
  Who: Public Works; USD 501

✓ Start “shame” campaign tactics such as “Dear Johns” letter writing to wives, videotaping street activity, or holding up signs.
  Who: Ward-Meade NIA

✓ Develop decorative pedestrian lighting/streetscape project along 4th Street.
  This project should be included within the City’s CIP so that it is done in conjunction with or upon completion of the Sumner School community center and park space.
The NIA should work closely with Public Works, Metro Planning, and adjacent neighborhoods. It is estimated that 80 lights are needed (Topeka to Washburn).

Who: Public Works, City Council
When: 2004
Cost: $200,000

Priority "C" Activities (Hold off until more of A and B get accomplished)

✓ Develop a "welcoming package" of the neighborhood for realtors and new residents.
  Who: Ward-Mead NIA

✓ Investigate need for traffic calming device to prevent truck traffic on Taylor.
  The NIA should initiate contact with the City's Traffic Engineer and Transportation Planner.
  Who: Public Works (Traffic Engineering)

✓ Make Ward-Mead Park fencing, lighting, and preservation improvements.
  This project should be included within the City's CIP.
  Who: Parks and Recreation, City Council
  When: 2005
  Cost: $200,000

✓ Start a holiday home tour or historic walking tour.
  Who: Ward-Mead NIA