A JOINT SHAWNEE COUNTY RESOLUTION AND CITY OF TOPEKA ORDINANCE
introduced by Mayor 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 24th day of July, 2003.

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Topeka, Kansas, on this 15th day
of July, 2003, as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 7, Part J, of the Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive
Metropolitan Plan recognizes additional planning and community development issues
that 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 Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan, a copy of which is attached
hereto as Attachment A 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 SE 29th Street to the north, SE 37th Avenue to the south, SE
Kansas Avenue to the west and SE California Avenue to the east. The Hi-Crest
Neighborhood Plan sets forth a ten (10) year vision with goals and strategies relating to
land use, redevelopment, housing, infrastructure, parks, and community building in a
comprehensive manner that recognizes the desire to increase the livability of the Hi-
Crest Neighborhood. The Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan is representative of the
collective input provided by stakeholder organizations in the area, which includes the Hi-Crest Neighborhood Improvement Association.

Section 3. The Topeka-Shawnee County Comprehensive Metropolitan Plan is hereby amended by the addition of the Hi-Crest 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 Board of County Commissioners, Shawnee County, Kansas JUL 24 2003.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
Shawnee County, Kansas

Vic Miller, Chairman

Theodore Ensley, Vice-Chair

Marice Kane, Member

Approved as to Legality and Form: Date 7.31.03

SHAWNEE CO. COUNSELOR

PASSED and APPROVED by the City Council July 15, 2003

Harry Felker, Mayor

ATTEST:
Cynthia Beck, County Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY
DATE 6/19/03
TO BE CODIFIED X
NOT TO BE CODIFIED

 Vyres/Joint Hi-Crest Neighborhood
6/19/03
Hi-Crest
Topeka, Kansas

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

A Cooperative Effort By:
The Hi-Crest Neighborhood Improvement Association
&
Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department

ADOPTED:
Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, June 23, 2003
Topeka City Council, July 15, 2003
Shawnee County Board of Commissioners, July 24, 2003
Revised,____
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Hi-Crest Neighborhood Improvement Association
Joseph Ledbetter, President
Clara Simmons, Past Immediate President
Maggie Pinick, Vice-President
Barbara Brubaker, Secretary
Dewey Brubaker, Treasurer

City of Topeka Mayor
Harry "Butch" Felker

Topeka City Council
John Alcala
Clark Duffy
Bill Haynes
Harold Lane
John Nave
Duane Pomeroy
Jeff Preisner
Gary Price
Lisa Stubbs

Shawnee County Board of Commissioners
Vic Miller, Chair
Marice Kone
Theodore D. Ensley

Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission
Harold Houck, Chairman
Ivan Weichert, Vice-Chairman

Howard Blackmon
Winnie Crapsen
Rowena Horr
Jim Hunt
Dave Ireland
Henry McClure

Phil Morse
Ned Nusbaum
Ramon Powers
William Vicary
John Williams
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Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department
David Thurbon, AICP, Director
Bill Flander, AICP, Planning Manager (Project Manager)
James Gittemeier, Planner I (Project Staff)
Leslie Gish, Office Assistant II

Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan
June, 2003
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Introduction and Purpose
INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Background In July of 2000, Topeka City Council and Shawnee County Board of Commissioners adopted the Neighborhood Element of the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Comprehensive Plan 2025, identifying the western portion of the Hi-Crest Neighborhood as a “high priority” area for planning assistance and re-investment. The Neighborhood Element set forth a schedule for developing neighborhood plans which included the Hi-Crest (West) area in 2002. Hi-Crest is the 9th neighborhood plan to be initiated by Metro Planning since 1997.

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 Hi-Crest Neighborhood. The Plan should be fluid, not static. The scope of the Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan comprehensively addresses land use, housing, public facilities, safety, and neighborhood character. 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.

However, it is impractical to expect all recommendations of this plan to be implemented in a timely manner. Recommendations for infrastructure, housing, and parks all involve major City expenditures that are constrained by the amount of tax revenues the City collects. Other neighborhood plans also compete for such allocations. Reliance on non-City funding sources will also determine the pace of implementation. Thus, another purpose of this plan is to provide guidance for priorities in order to determine the most prudent expenditures with limited resources.

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 Hi-Crest be developed in the year 2002. While Hi-Crest is primarily rated as out-patient in the Neighborhood Element, the western-third of the neighborhood is classified as intensive care and considered a high priority for planning assistance and resource allocation. In addition, the Topeka-Shawnee County Regional Trails and Greenways Plan, adopted in 2001, recommends the extension of the Landon Trail through Hi-Crest as part of the regional trail system.

Process (Refer to flow chart) This document has primarily been prepared in collaboration with the Hi-Crest NIA. Beginning in the late summer of 2002 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 Avondale East Elementary in
September of 2002. Starting in October 2002, the NIA has devoted their monthly meetings to formulating the goals, guiding principles, strategies, and actions recommended in the Plan. Staff also conducted a number of interviews with Hi-Crest stakeholders (e.g., schools, churches, realtors, residents, developers, City departments, etc.). On May 19, 2003 a second community workshop was held at Avondale East Elementary to validate the Plan’s recommendations and prioritize actions. The Plan was subsequently approved by the Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Commission, Topeka City Council, and Shawnee County Commission in the summer of 2003.
Neighborhood Profile
I. NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE

A. LOCATION AND CHARACTER

Location  The Hi-Crest Neighborhood is located in southeast Topeka, approximately 2 miles south of the Capitol Building and Downtown Topeka. Hi-Crest is bounded by SE 29th Street on the north, SE 37th Street on the south, SE California Avenue to the east and SE Kansas Avenue to the west. The neighborhood comprises about 1,055 acres.

Setting

History  The Hi-Crest Neighborhood is a post-World War II “inner-ring” suburb that largely developed during the 1950’s but is still not completely built-out today. Today, the western-third of Hi-Crest represents the City’s only Post-War “intensive care” neighborhood.

The first major development in Hi-Crest was the building of the Shawnee Country Club in 1921. Following development of the country club were the homes immediately to the northeast of the Club, which were built in the late 1940s. East of Indiana Street, homes began to randomly sprout up once Ross
Elementary School (formerly Highland Park South) was built in 1955. This area was annexed into the City of Topeka in 1957.

In the 1950s, post-war "Levittown" homes were built south and west of the Country Club. Highland Crest #1 (east of Adams Street) and #2 (west of Adams Street) grew out of the need to accommodate Forbes Field personnel in 1952 during an era when federal housing policies perpetuated efficient, low-cost, suburban developments. The intentions were good — a self-contained neighborhood of mass-produced, unpretentious single-family homes that were small, efficient, affordable, and functional as pass-through housing for military personnel. West of Adams, the neighborhood was anchored in the middle by Avondale East Elementary School (built 1954) and flanked by a large park space on the edge. The street layout followed natural contours, prevented "through" traffic, minimized sharp corners, contained no sidewalks, and featured long blocks to save on the cost of building too many streets. Much of the housing was of a simple 2-bedroom, one-story design, typically 800 square feet without ornamentation, basements, or garages. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) recommended such designs as standard to keep costs low through economies of scale* (see picture insert). The typical lot dimensions for these homes were 60-feet by 110-feet or 50-feet by 125-feet. This area was annexed into the City of Topeka in 1957.

*(National Register Bulletin, "Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Historic Residential Suburbs"); National Park Service)

In 1960, the Glenn Manor Subdivision was developed south of the Country Club between SE 35th and SE 37th Streets (annexed in 1958). In contrast, with the neighborhood surrounding it, this subdivision had bigger homes on slightly larger lots and urban infrastructure, which included curbs, sidewalks, and generously-sized street widths. Land remained undeveloped east of Indiana Street except for the new Eisenhower Middle School built in 1961.

The closing of Forbes Field as an Air Force base in the 1970s exacerbated inherent flaws in the Highland Crest #1 and #2 designs. This was about the time that most homes were approaching their 30-year lifespan in need of major structural, exterior, and system repairs. The same thing that made them affordable (simple, plain, and small) also made them uncompetitive compared to newer suburban homes or older historic homes. Many homes quickly turned from owner to renter-occupied. The lack of space led to outside storage, parking in front yards, and damaged landscaping. The street layout intended to prevent "through" traffic actually made internal circulation very confusing, encouraged speeding, or made easy escapes for criminals. The inordinately
long blocks without sidewalks failed to promote a sense of ownership and pedestrian activity was diminished. Other than Avondale East Elementary, the area had no anchor since Highland Crest Park was isolated from the bulk of the neighborhood. Property values plummeted and a major shift to rental housing took place. The commercial strip center (Highland Crest Shopping Center) on 29th Street declined and is presently in a state of partial redevelopment.

B. EXISTING CONDITIONS

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. The western half of Hi-Crest is designated as intensive care (most seriously distressed conditions) and is considered a high priority for re-investment. The eastern half of Hi-Crest is designated as out-patient (favorable conditions) and considered low priority for re-investment.

Land Use The neighborhood is predominately residential with 93% of all parcels and nearly 60% of all land area devoted to residential uses (see Table 1 and Map #1). Within the residential land use, less than 1% of all the residential parcels are non-single family. After the residential land use, the next biggest use within the neighborhood is open space, which takes up a little over 18% of the neighborhood. The open space category includes the Shawnee Country Club (126 acres) and Highland Crest Park (13 acres).

<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>2,019</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>450.8</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Two Family</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Multi Family</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Home Park</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>147.1</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking/Utility</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>82.7</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal</td>
<td>2,178</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>809.8</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public R-O-W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>245.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area with R-O-W</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1055.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Dept. & Shawnee County Appraisers Office (2003)
Primary commercial retail land uses are found along Hi-Crest’s main east-west arterial, 29th Street. The neighborhood is not fully built out, which leads to a high number of parcels and un-platted areas that are vacant. The area between SE 29th Street and SE 31st Street, west of the Shawnee Country Club is largely vacant and the area in the southeast corner of the neighborhood, south of I-470 is partially vacant. These two areas are the reason why over 10% of the total land area is vacant.

Zoning
The zoning pattern of the neighborhood has not changed much since it was originally zoned. Therefore, single-family residential zoning with commercial zoning along SE 29th Street largely covers Hi-Crest. (See Map 2)

Housing Density
The housing density of 4.2 units/acre found in Hi-Crest can be credited to the neighborhood being mostly comprised of detached single-family residential units. 88% of the housing units in the neighborhood are within single-family structures while two-family and multiple family units account for only about 8% of the total housing units.

Table 2
Housing Density – Hi-Crest

<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>Single Family</td>
<td>2,019</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>450.8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Family</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>43.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Home Park</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Density Residential</strong></td>
<td>2,296</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>482.1</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Density All</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>809.8</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gross Density (w/ ROW)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1055.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2003)

Housing Conditions
Overall, housing conditions in Hi-Crest are surprisingly good. Nearly 62% of all the residential units surveyed had only minor deficiencies, as seen in Table #3. However, as seen in Map #3, the housing conditions drastically vary depending on the area of the neighborhood. Housing conditions are most sound in the eastern and southern-most portions of the neighborhood. On the flip side, the worse housing conditions are found in the western 1/3 of the neighborhood, as well as the area immediately south of Shawnee Country Club.
Table 3  
Housing Conditions – Hi-Crest

<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>Single Family</td>
<td>1,247</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,254</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>642</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2003)

Tenure

Like the housing conditions, tenure drastically varies from one area of the neighborhood to the next. Overall, 58% of the housing units are owner occupied, with only 3% of the units vacant. However, the differences within the neighborhood are evident by just looking at the central portion of the neighborhood. The south-central portion of the neighborhood has high home ownership rates, while the area immediately south of the Shawnee Country Club has low home ownership rates. The largest area of rental units, excluding the multiple family apartment buildings, is the western-most portion of the neighborhood (see Table #4 and Map #4).

Table 4  
Housing Tenure – Hi-Crest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Tenure</th>
<th>Owner Occupied</th>
<th>Renter Occupied</th>
<th>Vacant</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Units</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family</td>
<td>1,190</td>
<td>57.5%</td>
<td>792</td>
<td>38.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Family</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi Family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,198</td>
<td>57.9%</td>
<td>806</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka-Shawnee County Metropolitan Planning Department (2003)

Values and Age

According to data gathered by the Shawnee County Appraiser, the mean value of single-family homes is $37,464 (see Table #5). As discussed previously, the values of the homes vary drastically too. The value of a single-family home in Hi-Crest ranges from as little as $1,400 to as high as $134,000. While the value of the homes varies greatly, the age of the homes do not. For the most part, the housing stock is less than or around 50 years old. According to the 1990 census, approximately 97% of all...
Table 5
Property Values – Hi-Crest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Single Family</td>
<td>$32,500</td>
<td>$37,464</td>
<td>$1,400</td>
<td>$134,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Two Family</td>
<td>$63,250</td>
<td>$119,883</td>
<td>$38,500</td>
<td>$714,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential - Multi-Family</td>
<td>$1,005,506</td>
<td>$1,005,506</td>
<td>$310,000</td>
<td>$1,732,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Home Park</td>
<td>$289,000</td>
<td>$357,463</td>
<td>$268,000</td>
<td>$515,390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vacant</td>
<td>$920</td>
<td>$3,332</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>$32,230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shawnee County Appraiser (2003)

Public Safety

Map #5 illustrates the number of reported major crimes committed by block according to crime statistics provided by the Topeka Police Department for 2002. The highest concentrations of reported major crimes occurred within the western 1/3 of the neighborhood. Major crimes are defined as Part 1 crimes – murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and theft.

Building Activity

Hi-Crest has not received much development activity in the last decade. A few single-family building permits and demolitions have comprised much of the activity until recently. Half of the Highland Crest Shopping Center was demolished for a new conditioned-storage building at 29th and Fremont Road. In addition, new duplexes have been built across from Eisenhower Middle School on Minnesota and new homes are being built southwest of I-470.

Circulation

As identified by the Topeka-Shawnee County Transportation Plan – 2015, the neighborhood contains five arterials routes – 29th Street, 37th Street Kansas Avenue, Adams Street, and California Street. Indiana Avenue and the Fremont Road to 31st Street route are the only collector streets in the neighborhood. The remaining streets are all local roads. Circulation within the neighborhood on the local roads is difficult to figure out due to the confusing curvilinear street pattern, especially in the western 1/3 of the neighborhood. Hi-Crest is serviced by a bus line running through the neighborhood from California, 32nd, Indiana, 35th Terrace, Adams, Golf Park, Fremont, Girard and out to 37th Streets (see map at right).

Public transportation exists along Bus Route No. 8 as depicted on the map at right.
Table 6
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) – Hi-Crest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intersection</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>AADT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fremont, south of 31st St</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th St, west of Adams St</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>16986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California Ave, north of 37th St</td>
<td>Arterial</td>
<td>7169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana Ave, north of 33rd St</td>
<td>Collector</td>
<td>2801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Topeka City Engineer (2002)
C. SOCIOECONOMIC TRENDS

Hi-Crest is located in parts of Census Tracts 29 (block groups 1,2,4), 30.01 (block groups 1,2), and 30.02 (block group 1). Information from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census is summarized in the tables below.

Table 7
Population – Hi-Crest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POPULATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>5580</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>5882</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2954</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>2660</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2626</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>2380</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1488</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1295</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Non-black/white)</td>
<td>3382</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>4235</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Origin</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>352</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>112%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 5 years</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 to 9 years</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 14 years</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 to 19 years</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 to 24 years</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 34 years</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 to 44 years</td>
<td>762</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>1075</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>-29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 to 54 years</td>
<td>809</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 to 64 years</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 and Over</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>526</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Age**</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8
Households – Hi-Crest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOUSEHOLDS</td>
<td>2106</td>
<td>2183</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>-47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married Couple</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>1139</td>
<td>-61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-Headed (no husband)</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons per Household</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INCOMES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Median</td>
<td>$30,907</td>
<td>$22,894</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Median</td>
<td>$35,836</td>
<td>$26,778</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$12,727</td>
<td>$9,924</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Below Poverty Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Persons</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Children &lt;18</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORK</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons (16+ years)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>-18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduates</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau – 1990 & 2000*
D. SUB-AREA PROFILES

Hi-Crest (West)
1990 Population = 2,718 (Census Tracts 29.1, 29.2, 29.4)
2000 Population\(^1\) = 2,546 (Census Tracts 29.1, 29.2, 29.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital Signs</th>
<th>Stability Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate (90): 28% high</td>
<td>Population Change (90-00): -6% ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes Reported Rank (96-98): high</td>
<td>New Residential/Demolition Ratio (90-98): 0/5 ↓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Residential Property Value(^2) (02): $17,920 low</td>
<td>Median Residential Sale Price(^3) (97-01): 93.1% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Homeownership(^4) (02): 35% below avg.</td>
<td>School Attendance Rate Change (97-01): 3.0% ↑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarded Houses (97-98): above average</td>
<td>School Enrollment Change (97-01): 5.6% ↑</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIAGNOSIS: Intensive Care Stable**

The West sub-area of Hi-Crest represents the City’s only “intensive care” Post-War suburban neighborhood. Originally developed to accommodate housing for Forbes Air Force Base in the early 1950's, the majority of homes are small (<800 sq. ft.) without basements reminiscent of “Levittown” developments mass-produced after World-War II. Though built as single-family units, almost 2/3 of the houses are renter-occupied or vacant. Majority of blocks have no sidewalks. Several utility/drainage easements are overgrown and present safety issues. Lack of interior storage space tends to force a household’s storage into open yard areas. Trees and shrubbery are generally overgrown and tend to block street lighting.

Avondale East Elementary serves as the anchor for the neighborhood. Avondale East's stability indicators are impressive. Park space is non-existent on the interior. Highland Crest Park is hidden. Landon Trail along Butcher Creek could have potential connection to neighborhood. Street layout south of Golf Park is extremely confusing which does not help give the neighborhood an identity. Some blocks are too long to foster pedestrian use and "ownership". Change in median residential sale price is misleading due to number of new homes constructed outside Hi-Crest south of 37th Street. 29th Street commercial corridor is receiving a “make-over” with new conditioned storage space, but remains disconnected from residential areas. Large potential exists for major infill development between 31st and Fremont which has great views of Capitol and downtown.

**Notes:**
1. No change in Census block boundaries from 1990 to 2000
2. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office
3. Source: Topeka Board of Realtors; by Census Tract in real dollars
4. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office and Metropolitan Planning Department
Hi-Crest (Southeast)

1990 Population = 1,927 (Census Tracts 30.2)
2000 Population¹ = 1,886 (Census Tracts 30.01.2, 30.02.1018-1022)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital Signs</th>
<th>Stability Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate (90): 5% low</td>
<td>Population Change (90-00): -2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Homeownership⁴ (02): 75% high</td>
<td>School Attendance Rate Change (97-01): -0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarded Houses (97-98): low</td>
<td>School Enrollment Change (97-01): 28.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIAGNOSIS: Out Patient**

The Southeast sub-area of Hi-Crest has a couple of different personalities. The blocks just south of Shawnee Country Club are reminiscent of the Hi-Crest West sub-area. This subdivision was laid out as the first "Highland Crest" in 1951 (area west of Adams is "Highland Crest #2"). While the lot and street designs are similar, the homes are typically in better condition. However, this section is showing some signs of deterioration and should be saved before further decline into an "at risk" situation. Interestingly enough, the homes that back-up to the golf course show the most deterioration and lowest homeownership levels. The southern half of the sub-area (Glenn Manor #2 circa 1960) easily has the soundest blocks in Hi-Crest. Standard urban infrastructure is all in place, trees are trimmed, yards are well-kept, and lots/homes are larger. Homeownership levels are very strong.

Ross Elementary and Eisenhower Middle schools anchor the area east of Indiana and have plenty of room. Two small parks are found at either end of Highland Crest subdivision, but do not provide great access because of the lack of sidewalks or pathways to the remainder of the subdivision. Some blocks are too long to foster pedestrian use and "ownership". Vacant land along the Turnpike offers plenty of opportunity for new housing development as evidenced by the new residential/demolition permit ratio and school enrollment. More land is available for this purpose. No commercial services are available in this sub-area.

**Notes:**
1. Population total adjusted to reflect constant Census block boundary changes from 1990 to 2000
2. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office
3. Source: Topeka Board of Realtors; by Census Tract in real dollars
4. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office and Metropolitan Planning Department
Hi-Crest (Northeast)

1990 Population = 1,258 (Census Tracts 30.3)
2000 Population\(^1\) = 1,260 (Census Tracts 30.01.1002-1019, 30.01.1023-1029)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vital Signs</th>
<th>Stability Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate (90): 9% below average</td>
<td>Population Change (90-00): 0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crimes Reported Rank (96-98): below average</td>
<td>New Residential/Demolition Ratio (90-98): 1/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Resid. Property Value(^2) (02): $48,400 below avg.</td>
<td>Median Residential Sale Price(^3) (97-01): 14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Family Homeownership(^4) (02): 80% high</td>
<td>School Attendance Rate Change (97-01): -0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boarded Houses (97-98): low</td>
<td>School Enrollment Change (97-01): 28.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DIAGNOSIS: Out Patient**

The Shawnee Country Club anchors the western half of the Northeast sub-area. The homes just northeast of the country club were developed in the late 1940s (Shawnee Highlands) and are included in the sub-area’s strongest blocks. The eastern half of the sub-area is also stable, but with some pockets of slight decline. Streets are very narrow with open ditch drainage. Standard urban infrastructure is badly needed on some blocks. Only alleys in Hi-Crest occur here, but are barely improved.

Large parcels of vacant land exist between 32\(^{nd}\) and Ross Elementary/Eisenhower Middle schools. No park space exists. Hi-Crest’s only apartment complexes are found in this area just off of 29\(^{th}\) Street. Highland Park Methodist Church is a major anchor in the northern end of the sub-area and consumes an entire block. A variety of neighborhood commercial services are readily available along 29\(^{th}\) Street with two large grocery stores located just outside the area at 29\(^{th}\) and California. Population is very stable. Homeownership is highest of all single-family areas in Hi-Crest, but values are more moderate than Southeast sub-area.

**Notes:**

1. Population total adjusted to reflect constant Census block boundary changes from 1990 to 2000
2. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office
3. Source: Topeka Board of Realtors; by Census Tract in real dollars
4. Source: Shawnee County Appraisers Office and Metropolitan Planning Department

Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan
June, 2003
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E. PROFILE SUMMARY

Conditions of the Hi-Crest Neighborhood tell a few different stories: (1) the Northeast Sub-Area and the area south of Pinecrest Drive (Southeast Sub-Area) are have the most stability, (2) the area immediately south of the Shawnee Country Club is weakening and showing signs that it could get worse, and (3) the area west of Adams Street is decidedly unstable. Some of the impediments for re-investment include:

Needs/Constraints

- The western 1/3 of Hi-Crest has low homeownership, high crime, and housing conditions that show major and intermediate deterioration.
- Lack of storage space – no garages or basements
- Uncompetitive housing stock, small homes (800 sq. ft.), slab on grade construction.
- Lack of urban infrastructure (sidewalks and curbs).
- Lack of quality neighborhood commercial retail outlets.
- Need for more/better day care services.
- Confusing street network, complicated with long blocks.
- Park space that is not centralized, accessible, or visible.

On the other hand, there are many strengths and opportunities that can be seized upon to overcome these constraints:

Strengths/Opportunities

- The neighborhood contains a number of important institutions – Avondale East Elementary, Ross Elementary, Eisenhower Middle School, and a number of churches – that provide community anchors and quality of life amenities for the neighborhood.
- Infill development areas, especially west of Adams Street between 29th Street and 31st Street.
- Botwin and Company’s redevelopment of Highland Crest Shopping Center will breathe some life into the 29th Street corridor and serve as a catalyst for future investment.
- Under utilized Highland Crest Park and potential connection to the region’s trail system, particularly connecting the neighborhood to the Landon Trail.
- The neighborhood is close to major employers, Jostens and Teletec.
- Homeownership is very high within the eastern and south central residential areas with all but a few blocks having more than 50% owner-occupancy.
Vision and Goals
III. VISION and GOALS

A. Vision Statement

She will always remember the summer of 2003, the year young Jillian began the Cool Summers program and a journey that would bring her back to a transformed Hi-Crest neighborhood 15 years later.

She remembers how it was back then. She remembers how the gunfire at night and people loitering in the street would scare her. She remembers how her Mom would argue with the landlord over repairs to the house and how her neighbors didn’t really feel like real neighbors. She remembers how it always appeared so dark at night and being intimidated by walking in the street to school. She remembers how much she loved Avondale East where her cares disappeared and her teachers were so special.

15 years later, an older and wiser Jillian has returned to Hi-Crest. This time, though, her memories are distant. Today, she is a homeowner. Her neighbors across the street held a welcoming party and helped her move in. The home is new. She likes that it fronts the neighborhood park where she can watch the neighborhood children run while keeping an eye out for strangers. She likes the diversity of her neighbors, too. She loves the fact that she can safely push her baby stroller (even at night) on clean sidewalks without having to be in the street and do a “lap” around the nature trails in Highland Crest Park – a park she never knew existed as a kid. If she is feeling up to it, she’ll do her “lap” on the concrete Landon Trail. Her house, like most on the block, has a garage and extra space to grow a family. She does have some work to do on keeping her grass and new plants healthy like the rest of the block. She has most of her belongings in the new house after storing them at Flex Storage on 29th Street. In fact, she just received an OK from the manager to begin converting her space into her new office as an eye doctor. The beautiful trees and plantings along 29th Street, restaurants, post office, and convenience to day care make this spot ideal for her.

It’s finally nice to hear people around town remark on Hi-Crest in a positive way, a way she will always remember now.
B. Goals and Guiding Principles

**LAND USE**

**Goal** – Complete “build-out” of neighborhood in a land use pattern that re-establishes viable single-family residential areas, encourages healthy redevelopment of commercial corridors, and improves linkages to neighborhood commercial, open space, and institutional uses.

**Guiding Principles**

- Locate highest density residential land uses within proximity to established commercial districts and/or higher traffic corridors.

- Maintain low density residential as the primary land use along Adams and 37th Streets.

- Integrate additional park space within the interior of the neighborhood that connects pedestrians to a park/trail “system”.

- 29th Street should maintain its commercial node pattern east of Adams; introduce mix of uses west of Adams to “un-strip” the strip corridor.

- Develop Fremont Hill site into moderate density residential extension of the neighborhood that integrates community services and open space opportunities.

- Allow for appropriate location of day care centers while still protecting homeowner expectations in single-family areas.

**HOUSING**

**Goal** – Substantially increase attractiveness of the housing stock for homeowners and provide for greater housing choice.

**Guiding Principles**

- Create new housing sub-markets for homeowners and eliminate pockets of severely distressed housing sub-markets.

- Discourage public funding for rental rehabilitations in Hi-Crest.

- Ensure that new in-fill housing is affordable and of quality long-term design.
- Develop strategies to ensure landlord compliance with minimum housing/nuisance standards.

- Identify options for in-fill elderly housing development within Hi-Crest.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES**

**Goal** – Provide modern infrastructure and public facilities that will increase Hi-Crest's capacity for re-investment.

**Guiding Principles**

- Make neighborhood parks, trails, and open spaces more accessible, visible, and "kid friendly".

- Eliminate “ditch” drainage systems in priority areas.

- Create pedestrian friendly streetscapes (streets and sidewalks) that connect to the neighborhood’s amenities and assets.

- Make the schools the focal point of the neighborhood and explore ways to integrate community center-type activities.

**SAFETY**

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

**Guiding Principles**

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

- Improve the environmental design of the neighborhood through “defensible spaces” and “social connectivity” to prevent crime.

- Discourage unwanted or dangerous traffic through local neighborhood streets.
Goal – Create a positive image that will stimulate homeownership investment and promote social connectivity.

Guiding Principles

- Work together with community anchors and employers to help make them positive assets for the neighborhood.

- Create more opportunities for neighbors to help neighbors and welcome a diversity of peoples.

- Work to prevent nuisance and housing code violations from occurring while prioritizing enforcement efforts on more persistent and severe violations.

- Establish an identity within the neighborhood to give residents a better sense of ownership.

- Enhance Hi-Crest’s “front door” along the 29th Street corridor.
Land Use Plan
IV. LAND USE PLAN

The Hi-Crest Land Use Plan (Map #6) graphically illustrates a conceptual guide for future development and re-development that embodies the vision and goals presented in Section III. The map is conceptual and should not be used to determine precise zoning boundaries. The following land uses, zoning districts, and densities are the “maximum recommended” and assume less intensive land uses, zoning districts, or densities are appropriate.

**Residential – Low Density (Urban):** This category reserves urbanized areas of Hi-Crest that primarily front “local” low volume streets where the highest concentrations of single-family uses exist without a significant mixing of non-residential uses. These areas originally developed as compact single-family areas with more urbanized road/utility infrastructure. 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.

*Primary Uses:* single-family dwellings

*Zoning Districts:* R-1, R-2 (Single Family)

*Density:* 5-7 units/acre (net)

**Residential – Medium Density:** This category is applied exclusively to residential blocks that either are transitioning from a higher intensity land use area to a lower density single-family area or where viable two to four-unit complexes already exist. This category is applied to the vicinity of 31st Street and Fremont Road and near the Ross/Eisenhower schools (2-4 unit complexes may also be appropriate in the Mixed Use categories). The purpose of this category is to allow flexibility for medium density uses in potential infill development sites that do not conflict with expectations of existing single-family areas.

*Primary Uses:* Two to four-unit dwellings

*Zoning Districts:* “M-1A” (Limited Multiple-Family), “PUD” (M-2 Multiple-Family)

*Density/Intensity:* 8-14 dwelling units/acre (net)

**Residential – High Density:** This category is applied to exclusive multi-family residential blocks that are comprised of existing or potential apartment complex developments. Sites best suited for high density residential include those areas closest to activity zones such as major thoroughfares with public transportation and employment/shopping areas (Mission Towers). Blocks on the interior of predominantly single-family area are not ideal and should not be promoted for high density use. High density multi-family dwellings may be conditionally appropriate within Mixed Use categories.
Primary Uses: Multi-family dwellings (5+ units)
Zoning Districts: "M-2" (Multiple-Family)
Density/Intensity: 15-29 dwelling units/acre (net)

Commercial – Neighborhood: This designation allows for small-scale “mom and pop” businesses along Adams Street and 29th Street that would serve local needs of the neighborhood residents. Compatible uses include a family restaurant, 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 and parking requirements. These uses are intended to be an asset to neighborhood residents that can serve pedestrian convenience. They are not intended to attract a large number of non-local visitors.
Primary Uses: small-scale neighborhood commercial stores
Zoning Districts: C-2 (Commercial)
Density/Intensity: Low

Commercial – Mixed Use: This category allows for higher density residential and office uses to be integrated within predominantly commercial retail areas. Designated areas have demonstrated an oversupply of or aging retail facilities that are not competitive. This category is primarily found along 29th Street. Since 29th Street is a major image street, parking lots and open storage should be effectively screened from street frontages. Signage should be unified and monument signage encouraged. Current C-4 commercial zoning allows for high intensity uses that render 29th 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: C-2 or C-4 (Commercial); M-2 (Multi-Family); X-1 (Mixed Use)
Density/Intensity: Medium to High

Industrial: This designation recognizes industrial use areas located primarily along Kansas Avenue that does not encroach upon the residential interior of the neighborhood. This includes existing and future industrial expansion areas. Some attention to site buffering will be needed for the existing industrial areas along the Landon Trail.
Primary Uses: Light Industrial
Zoning Districts: I-1 (Light Industrial); 37th St
I-2 (Heavy Industrial); Kansas Ave
Density/Intensity: Heavy

Institutional: This designation recognizes existing schools, churches, non-profit service agencies, and utilities. Major expansion of existing institutional sites should be reflected on the map. Anticipated expansions are within low-density residential areas and should not pose any negative impacts on surrounding blocks.

Primary Uses: Schools, churches, etc.
Zoning Districts: primarily R-1 (Single-Family)
Intensity: Medium (limited occurrences)

Parks and Open Space: This designation represents both the passive open space areas without structural or recreational elements and the active park areas with structural or recreational elements. These areas provide visual respite and are either in a naturally occurring state or maintained in a more formal setting with landscaping, trees, and ground covers. They are most commonly formed as parks, trails, greenways, gateways, and wooded areas. Under this category, open space is both publicly and privately owned and maintained as right-of-way for street, railroad, or drainage purposes. It recognizes that the development of these sites are reserved for public purposes and shall not be developed.

Primary Use: Greenspace
Zoning District: OS-1 (Open Space)
Intensity: Low

Detailed Land Use Recommendations

i. 29th Street Commercial Corridor
29th Street is the major commercial corridor through southeast Topeka and is classified as a principal arterial street. It has developed in a commercial "strip" pattern over the years, but has lost much of its vitality particularly west of Adams. 29th Street is a major image corridor for southeast Topeka. Therefore, the design of the road should not only incorporate concepts of moving traffic efficiently, but also its appearance to the traveling public. In lieu of a more detailed corridor study, some general urban design recommendations for new development along 29th Street include:

a. Mixed Uses – Market realities must be addressed. Wall to wall commercial will not make for a healthy corridor. Integrating housing, office, and even some limited light industrial will give the corridor more flexibility to sustain its health in the long-term.

b. Parking – a parking lot should never be the focus from the street. Parking lots should be moved to the rear/side of buildings or screened from the street with landscaped setbacks.
c. **Streetscapes** — Public investment in a pedestrian oriented streetscape will complement redevelopment efforts. Landscaped medians, repaired/new sidewalks, brick crossings, decorative lighting, and neighborhood banners/signs should be included in the overall development strategy.

d. **Signage** — Commercial signage should be unified and monument signs encouraged to discourage visual clutter.

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### ii. Turnpike Area

The Turnpike Area refers to the vacant land wedged between Indiana Avenue and the I-470 turnpike to the east and west and 35th Street to the north the property. The area consists of 5 homes along Indiana Avenue and Highland Park Church of Christ. The northern portion of the Turnpike Area was platted as Pike View Subdivision in 1963 into 2 lots, with the Church sitting on Lot 1 and Lot 2 remaining vacant. The middle portion of the area remains unplatted with a house located on the northwestern corner of the lot. The southern portion of the Turnpike Area was platted in 1971 as Indiana Court Subdivision, a 12-lot cul-de-sac. Only 3 of the lots along Indiana Avenue have houses built upon them.

Today, this area remains mostly vacant. The question arises then, what to do with this land? The area is all zoned "R-1", Single Family Dwelling District. Some recommendations for this area include:

- Continuing Michigan Avenue south of 35th Street through Lot 2 of Pike View Subdivision to the platted right-of-way on the south side of Pike View Subdivision.
- Constructing the platted Indiana Court road from Indiana Avenue.
- Instead of placing a cul-de-sac at the end of Indiana Court, continuing the road north to connect it to Michigan Avenue.

Due to the noise generated by the Turnpike traffic, this area may be more suitable for other uses within the residential district besides homes, such as plant nurseries, recreational facilities and/or fields, religious assembly, and a reception, conference, assembly facility.
Revitalization Strategy
V. REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

A. Themes

"We take responsibility for what we perceive as ours."

Oscar Newman

✓ “Hi-Crest West Focus” — The area west of Adams Street between 31st and 37th Streets is without a doubt the most critical area of need within Hi-Crest. It is where the most serious negative conditions persist and where the Hi-Crest “name” receives a negative image. A rising tide of improvement in the western sub-area will in turn lift the corresponding boat of the greater neighborhood.

✓ “Create New Markets” — The existing housing market in Hi-Crest West is broke. Problems are entrenched. Negative conditions, such as lack of homeownership, crime hot spots, deteriorating homes, and overall image are not isolated to one or two blocks. Given the inherent design flaws of the original subdivision and widespread negative conditions, the only meaningful long-term remedy would be to make a substantial enough change in the environment so as to create a “new” market for housing. A “new” market or sub-market would need to be large enough, targeted enough, and comprehensive enough for the value of new investment to appreciate and withstand any negative impacts of the “old” existing market.

✓ “Identity” — The only anchor of Hi-Crest West, Avondale East Elementary School, stabilizes the blocks surrounding it. Unfortunately, the remainder of the area suffers from a lack of focal points to give the neighborhood an identity. Street after street and house after house all appear to be virtually indistinguishable from the other. The neighborhood park is hidden and difficult to find. To revitalize, the area must create “identity” features that can act as anchors for private investment and give a sense of ownership to the residents.

✓ “Crime Prevention for the Long Haul” — There are many environmental design aspects of Hi-Crest West that make the area prone to criminal activity. The most important design aspects of preventing crime are the creation of “defensible spaces” and “social connectivity”. Defensible spaces are employed by well-defined public/private spaces with good view-sheds that promote natural surveillance. Social connectivity is the capability of residents to know their neighbors through chance encounters on the streets, sidewalks, and public facilities. Achieving these two objectives alone will empower residents to take back their neighborhood now and into the future.
B. Anchor Area Redevelopment

"Almost nobody travels willingly from sameness to sameness and repetition to repetition."

Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*

Since the Hi-Crest West sub-area was not designed with the long-term in mind, any meaningful revitalization depends on how well it is re-positioned for the next long-term (30 years). The clear result of good intentions is that the design of the Highland Crest #2 subdivision was inherently flawed. Uncompetitive housing stock, inferior infrastructure, and few positive amenities have lead to tenure and crime problems that have taken deep root. This is a recurring feedback loop nobody is quite sure how to get out of. Do you attack the crime in spite of the physical flaws inherent in the neighborhood or do you attack the physical flaws to improve the safety?

One drastic yet logical alternative would be to start over. The street patterns and housing stock alone doom the blocks south of Avondale West Elementary to an uncertain future even under ideal conditions. It’s sister subdivision to the east of Adams Street is also beginning to fall under the weight of these same flaws albeit on a smaller scale. Yet, a wholesale “scrape down” of the neighborhood is not practical. There is no comparable program to fund such a redevelopment. Acquisition and relocation alone are estimated to approach $24 million. Social upheaval would also be unprecedented and politically unpopular to say the least.

On the other hand, adopting a wholesale rehabilitation strategy or “stealth” approach ignores the magnitude and inherent nature of the problems. The most feasible course of action should be a targeted “scrape down” and “infill” approach combined with shorter-term strategies.

The Concept
Where and how to start? The goals of the plan must be re-stated to get a clearer picture of where to start. The land use and housing goals state, respectively:

"Complete ‘build out’ of neighborhood in a land use pattern that re-establishes viable single-family residential areas... and improves linkages to neighborhood commercial, open space, and institutional uses."

"Substantially increase attractiveness of the housing stock for homeowners and provide for greater choice."

In order for “viable single-family residential areas” to be re-established and “homeowners” attracted, the market must change in perception and reality. To do this, a critical mass of the Hi-Crest West sub-area must be revitalized to create a “tipping point” whereby private market forces can take over and complete the revitalization process. It is anticipated that substantial public intervention will be necessary to initiate such a process.
The most successful strategies in neighborhood revitalization build off of key assets or anchors, isolate weaknesses, and re-position them as strengths. Map #7 depicts these current features of the Hi-Crest West sub-area as defined below:

**Anchor** — These are rigid points of support that give a neighborhood identity. They are long-term community investments (e.g., schools, churches, parks) that draw people to them as destinations and thereby attract private investment around them. (e.g., Avondale East Elementary)

**Strength/Potential** — These areas are the relatively strongest blocks of a neighborhood which exhibit staying power. These are also underachieving areas that have the potential to become strengths or anchors given an appropriate stimulus. (e.g., Highland Crest Park, Landon Trail, blocks surrounding school, etc.)

**Weakness** — These have the highest concentrations of negative conditions such as low homeownership, vacant/boarded houses, poverty, and high crime. The more concentrated these are, the greater social problems occur and the more entrenched they become. Diluting their concentration gives surrounding areas a greater chance to revitalize on their own.

Spatial relationships play a dynamic role in the overall concept. Spread too thin, anchors will fail to influence beyond their natural reach. Done correctly, appropriately placed anchors can isolate weaker areas and leave them prone to more investment. Anchors that are spaced evenly, made visible, and linked to their surroundings will serve to strengthen those blocks around it. The blocks between anchors, like stores in a mall, will achieve greater value. Several new anchors must be created in Hi-Crest West (in addition to the school) that build off of existing strengths, squeeze out older markets that don’t work, and weave the fabric of the neighborhood back together. Map #8 shows the “after” picture of where these anchors can be created and the intended affect on blocks in between. These three major anchor areas are discussed in more detail below.

**Anchor Area #1: Fremont Hill**

Fremont Hill refers to the undeveloped parcels of land north of SE 31st Street bisected by SE Fremont Road. Much of the 60-acre area is vacant and represents the largest remaining undeveloped tract of “virgin” land within the City’s at risk/intensive care neighborhoods. This anchor area bridges the gap between the existing neighborhood south of 31st Street and the 29th Street commercial corridor. Some problems and potentials for the area include:

- Hilly topography and rocky terrain
- Higher than average infrastructure costs
- View-shed of the Capitol (31st and Fremont is highest point of neighborhood)
- Existing mobile home park
- Stream buffer requirements will limit build-out area
- Interested developers/owners (Botwin and Co.)
- Redevelopment of nearby Highland Crest Shopping Center on 29th Street for conditioned-storage space and new retail outlet (Botwin and Co.)
If successfully developed, this area would become the northernmost anchor of the Hi-Crest West sub-area and fortify the blocks between it and Avondale East Elementary. Botwin and Company, a Kansas City-based developer has options on 16 acres west of Fremont and is currently working on a master development plan through a City grant. Some of the recommendations for turning this area into an anchor include:

**New Housing**

A diverse array of new infill housing units is envisioned on the entire Fremont Hill site – family/elderly units, affordable/market-rate units, homeownership/rental, and varied lot sizes. The Botwin site alone would create a “new” housing sub-market for homeownership and potentially accommodate any displaced lower-end units within the interior of the neighborhood. Table #10 indicates the number of potential new homes in the target area. An existing mobile home park east of Fremont Street is not necessarily an immediate impediment since it is fairly well maintained. However, traditional housing development could expand if the mobile home park site is acquired which would also allow for higher density multi-family complexes closer to 29th Street.

**Street Layout**

To blend better with the existing neighborhood south of 31st Street while promoting pedestrian-friendly streets and social connectivity, local streets should be extended as much as possible while improving Fremont as a “collector” street for any new development. An alternative that should be explored is the “straightening” of Fremont to a T-intersection at 31st Street to make the area more defensible from speeding cars and dangerous sight lines. However, as a departure from the existing neighborhood, shorter blocks, narrower local streets, and alleys should be encouraged for greater social connectivity and front-yard aesthetics. (see draft layout at right)
New Open Space Linkages

It is envisioned that new additions of open space will be linked to the larger neighborhood’s park “system”. First, straightening Fremont Street could create a neighborhood park occupying the highest elevation point near 31st and Fremont. This would enable preservation of the view-shed to the Capitol dome. More natural open space should be integrated within any new development east of Fremont Street due to its natural woodlands and drainage courses. An east-west stream which flows westward into Butcher Creek behind the 29th Street commercial corridor should be buffered within any new development. Pedestrian linkages to the commercial corridor should be developed. Likewise, a larger natural buffer area along Butcher Creek should be incorporated into the Botwin site that has a pedestrian link to Highland Crest Park further south.

Some additional features of any new development in this area include incorporating plans for community services such as day-care, offices, and/or community meeting space. Water and sewer lines do abut the target area and could be extended within the site. Fremont and 31st Street would need to be upgraded to urban standards, possibly as collector streets, while new interior streets would be the responsibility of the developer. Potential build-out of the area also depends on geologic/environmental assessments for the area east of Fremont and integrating an appropriate street/lot pattern with its natural contours and features. The table below assumes acquisition of all existing parcels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Botwin Site</th>
<th>Fremont Hill West remainder</th>
<th>Fremont Hill East</th>
<th>Fremont Hill Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>16 acres</td>
<td>10 acres</td>
<td>32 acres</td>
<td>60 acres</td>
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<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>45 single-family</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>6.3 units/acre (gross)</td>
<td>6 units/acre (gross)</td>
<td>4 units/acre (gross)</td>
<td>5.0 units/acre (gross)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks/OS</td>
<td>3 acres</td>
<td>1 acre</td>
<td>4 acre</td>
<td>8 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Highland Crest Park Anchor Area refers to the park and its immediate surroundings. The area comprises approximately 26 acres, including 63 parcels. The underutilized park has enormous potential to become a critical strength for the neighborhood. Furthermore, the park is adjacent to some of the worse housing conditions, lowest homeownership levels, and highest concentration of crimes in Hi-Crest. Some problems and potentials include:

- Hidden from the neighborhood
- Inconvenient to access
- Under-utilized open space; within 100-year flood plain
- Long block along the park
• Homes back up to the park, no street-front presence
• Poor natural surveillance
• Point of access to Landon Trail

If successfully developed, Highland Crest Park would become a key anchor on the western edge of the neighborhood, providing important linkages between the Fremont Hill site and Avondale East Elementary, to the southern portions of the neighborhood as well as to the rest of the city, through a connection to the regional trail system. The recommendations below envision an area that turns the park into a major focal point for the neighborhood that not only creates a public space that serves the residents, but also a park that stimulates a strong housing market around it.

**Opening up the Park to the Neighborhood**

The key aspect for making Highland Crest Park an anchor for the neighborhood is to open up the park and make it easily visible and accessible to the surrounding residents. The park's biggest flaw is that few know it exists and those who do know its there find it difficult to actually access the park. Therefore, expanding the park to Irvingham and Girard Street would give the park a visible frontage and new entrance along Girard. This would create a situation that has homes fronting the park separated by a street, which in turn gives the park natural surveillance. A 100-foot stream buffer along Butcher Creek would be created returning this area to a more natural state. Furthermore, a natural area of native grasses and trees would be created on the southern half of the park. Within the areas that would retain the traditional park amenities, a picnic and playground area would be created at the front of the park at Irvingham and Girard. The remaining open space could be utilized for a number of recreational activities, including a soccer field, BMX track, skateboarding, etc.
New Homes and Rehabilitation
The park and infrastructure improvements are necessary to make the housing stock more competitive. As part of the new infrastructure, acquisition of derelict properties should be pursued for new and rehabilitated homeownership units. Wholesale acquisition of all lots for new housing may not be necessary, but priority should go to those lots that face the park. Some lots could be acquired and merged with adjoining homeownership lots that have existing houses. Existing houses within the target area could be made more competitive with garage and/or room additions. Table #11 indicates the number of potential new and rehabilitated homes in the target area.

Infrastructure Improvements
To achieve multiple goals of creating better linkages to anchors, making the area more pedestrian friendly, and promoting social connectivity, constructing new sidewalks and walkways, realigning Fremont Street, and improving automobile parking for the park are proposed as shown in Map #10. New sidewalks would be installed along all blocks to facilitate better pedestrian linkages and social connectivity. In addition, a wider, trail-size sidewalk would be installed along Irvingham Street between the Fremont Hill site and the park. This wider sidewalk would be paved in a way to signify that the sidewalk is an important interior pedestrian linkage to the park. Installing walkways and nature trails within the park would create recreation, transportation, and even educational benefits to the neighborhood. Also, an important component of the new walkways would be a bridge over Butcher Creek linking the park with the Landon Trail and a connection to the regional trail system.

New Traffic/Parking Pattern
In addition, to pedestrian linkages, an important vehicular linkage through out the western portion of the neighborhood is Fremont Street. The street is classified as a collector, which signifies it as an important connecting street within the neighborhood. The realignment proposal would bring Fremont through to Girard Street, removing the stop at 33rd Terrace. 33rd Terrace would then become a one-way street north to 35th Street. This realignment would allow Fremont Street to properly serve its role as a collector street. Lastly, improving the parking situation at the park is an important aspect for creating a more active, user-friendly park. A new parking facility constructed along Girard south of the proposed Picnic Area, would provide a visible area with natural surveillance. This lot could be used as a trailhead for those biking, in-line skating, jogging, or walking the regional trail system. The other parking lot, which currently exists, would provide interior parking near to the picnic areas and additional parking for the activity areas.
The park area has tremendous potential to stabilize the western edge of the neighborhood with better integration into the overall neighborhood. Greater use and linkages to Highland Crest Park will make it the key anchor in the overall park system for the neighborhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table #11</th>
<th>Potential Build Out of the Highland Crest Park Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alternative A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Area</td>
<td>26 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Plants Area</td>
<td>6 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Area</td>
<td>10 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/Rehab Area</td>
<td>6 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/Rehab Units</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Anchor Area #3: 34th/Pinecrest/35th Street**

The blocks intersected by 33rd Terrace, 34th Street, Pinecrest Drive, and 35th Street between Bryant and Irvingham represents 38 acres and 163 dwelling units. It is the heart of a historically high crime area as identified by the Topeka Police Department. It also exhibits some of the highest housing deterioration and lowest homeownership levels of the neighborhood. In short, it is the highest concentration of unstable conditions in Hi-Crest. Other problem issues identified include:

- Long blocks with no sidewalks
- No direct pedestrian linkage to elementary school from 34th, Pinecrest, and 35th
- Lack of focal point or identity; confusing street layout
- Overgrown drainage easements behind homes offer refuge for fleeing criminals
- Poor natural surveillance because of long blocks and vegetation overgrowth
- Parked cars and open storage in front yards; no landscaping
- Speeding traffic; drug-related traffic
- Housing stock uncompetitive

The recommendations below envision an area that relies on better linkages to the school and a new focal point to create a self-contained housing sub-market that is big enough to control it’s own destiny. Those improvements include:

**New Park and Focal Point**

The key to anchoring this target area is through the development of a new focal point - a neighborhood park occupying the center of the target area. The park would be fronted by houses separated by a street giving the park excellent natural surveillance. Alternative locations are shown on Map #11 that range from 2.0 to 3.5 acres depending on various financial and design factors. In all cases, the park would give the interior of the neighborhood a unique identity to anchor other investments, remove substandard housing, de-densify the area, give residents
a sense of ownership, and provide an amenity to attract homeowners back into the area.

**New Street Layout, Alleys, and Sidewalks**

To achieve multiple goals of creating better linkages to anchors, making the area more pedestrian friendly, and promoting social connectivity, several new street layouts are proposed as shown in Map #11. Extending Emerson, Dupont, Colfax, and/or Dupont Place between the new park and the school would create direct pedestrian linkages, shorten blocks, and provide for new home sites. More intersections would also create more opportunity for social connections and slow down traffic while providing better circulation patterns. A 16-foot alley could be created within the existing 30' drainage/utility easement as a deterrent for crime and to remove parked cars from the front yards. Sidewalks would also be installed on all blocks to facilitate pedestrian linkages and social connectivity.

**New Homes and Rehabilitations**

The above infrastructure and park improvements are necessary to make the housing stock more competitive. As part of the new infrastructure, acquisition of derelict properties should be pursued for new and rehabilitated homeownership units. Wholesale acquisition of all lots for new housing may not be necessary, but priority should go to those lots that face the new park or new streets. Some lots could be acquired and merged with adjoining homeownership lots that have existing houses. Existing houses within the target area could be made more competitive with garage and/or room additions. Table #12 indicates the number of potential new and rehabilitated homes.

**New Traffic Patterns**

Finally, as result of meetings with the Topeka Police Department and the neighborhood residents, it is recommended that landscaped traffic diveters (see insert picture) be installed with the overall redevelopment of the street layout. This would not only assist Police in their pursuit of criminals, but also limit local traffic to just those residents living in the target area. Currently, 33rd Terrace has the highest traffic count of any local street in Hi-Crest West (905 trips, *City of Topeka Public, 2002*). The diveters, as depicted on Map #11, help to further the goal of creating a self-contained development with average traffic volumes that has broader appeal to new homeowners.

Because these blocks are so symbolic of the negative image portrayed of Hi-Crest, they have the potential to completely change Hi-Crest’s image if turned around. Very few, if any, initiatives will accomplish a lasting affect unless the “bleeding” is stopped. It is positioned far enough from the school and Highland Crest Park so as to be central to the
portion of the neighborhood that finds itself too far from those anchors. Concerns of
displacing residents can be ameliorated by reserving some of the new units in this target
area and the Fremont Hill target area for relocation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Alternative A</th>
<th>Alternative B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
<td>38 acres</td>
<td>38 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Units</td>
<td>128 units</td>
<td>136 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density</td>
<td>3.4 units/acre</td>
<td>3.6 units/acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>3.5 acres</td>
<td>2.0 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table #12
Potential Build-Out of 34th/Pinecrest/35th Site

C. Housing (Short-Term)

For long-term housing objectives, it is important to concentrate improvements as described
in the last section – a critical mass of visible housing improvements in a targeted 2-3 block
area that has spin-off effects on surrounding blocks. However, prior to accomplishing those
objectives a practical consideration is necessary for housing improvements in the short-term
– neighborhood-wide strategies (primarily targeted to the Hi-Crest West sub-area) that
are pursued parallel to longer-term redevelopment activities.

- Property Rehabilitation/Homeownership - Several deficiencies with existing
  homes and properties could be rectified through rehabilitation activities to
  encourage greater homeownership. Those include:

  - Home Remodeling/Expansion - The typical 800 sq. ft. home will need
    additional living and storage space if the housing stock is to be more
    competitive for homeownership. Adding larger detached garages in
    the rear yard or smaller attached garages in the front that expand the
    living area are essential to alleviating outdoor storage issues and
    "modernizing" the housing stock. Local architecture students could be
    engaged to develop prototype remodel designs. Incentives like the
    Neighborhood Revitalization Program tax rebate are not sufficient
    enough to entice this expansion alone because property values are so
    low. Incentives for remodeling could be done in conjunction with
    forgivable grant programs of the City (see "City-Sponsored Programs"
    below).

  - Lot Expansion - In a similar manner, expansion of the lot may help
    accomplish the above remodeling objectives. Opportunities to demolish
    blighted vacant homes by the City and offer the vacant land to
    adjoining property owners should be considered.
- **Tree Trimming** – Overgrowth of trees and lawn vegetation lends to an unkept appearance that detracts from the value of the housing and blocks lighting at night. If nothing else, trimming back trees and vegetation would make considerable difference in appeal and safety. Until a larger contingent of owner-occupied properties exist, it will be necessary to undertake major neighborhood “trim-ups” on a yearly basis. Army Reservists and Marine volunteers have helped organized something akin to this in the past and the City’s Water Pollution Control Division has offered to trim-up the drainage easements.

- **Volunteers** – 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.

- **City Sponsored Programs** – 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. 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. Since the program gives a choice of neighborhood options to prospective homeowners, it is not surprising to note that no TOTO homes have been selected for the Hi-Crest West sub-area. 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.

- **Employer-Assisted Housing** – Across the country, major employers who have a stake in the well-being of a transitional neighborhood because of their location and the employees who live there initiate low-interest loan or downpayment programs for homeownership for their employees. The idea is that the employer can help achieve a more stable workforce and surroundings which is good for retaining/attracting employees. Major employers in the area like Teletech and Jostens could work with lending institutions to initiate a similar program for Hi-Crest.

- **Landlord Cooperation** – The unusually high number of landlords (those that own 5 or more rental homes) in Hi-Crest West have created undeniable tension with homeowners who are often left to complain about the run-down condition of rental properties they live next to. In order to implement the guiding principle of ensuring **landlord compliance with minimum housing/nuisance standards**, several strategies...
are outlined below that prevent blighted rental property conditions before they undermine homeowner values and bring down the neighborhood:

- **Cooperative Nuisance Code Enforcement** – Recently, the Shawnee County Landlords Association, City inspectors, and NIA have worked hand-in-hand to identify rental and homeowner properties that have nuisance or housing code violations. Their approach has been to educate the landlord or occupant on maintenance responsibilities prior to City inspectors citing them for a violation. This cooperative process has worked well in the past to diffuse complaints before they are out-of-hand and encourages a self-compliance approach vs. an adversarial approach.

- **Central Dumpster Location for Landlords** – An all too common sight is an evicted tenant's pile of debris and furniture lying at the front curb for days that has been knocked over, picked through or blown into adjacent yards. This common occurrence happens because trash pick-up is only one day a week and landlords want to avoid hauling fees to the county dump site. Instead of continually citing landlords for putting unsecured trash out too early, the concept of a central dumpster location in the neighborhood has been proposed that would be limited to those landlords who pay for it. To implement such an idea, an inconspicuous public or semi-public location should be identified (e.g., park, church, commercial shopping center, etc.) that is sufficiently screened. Residential blocks should be avoided.

- **Rental Certificate Program** – Many of the homeowner-renter tensions in the neighborhood could be avoided through establishment of rental certificate program. Housing code issues would be inspected and crime-free training would be required in return for the rental certificate. It would act as an incentive for landlords to maintain their properties in a safe and livable manner before leasing them on an annual basis. While a similar program has been initiated city-wide (see Crime Free Multi-Housing Program, pg....), it could be eased into as a mandatory pilot program in Hi-Crest for code offenders in high crime areas. Other landlords could voluntarily seek certification of their units to make them more competitive.
D. Circulation and Infrastructure

The traffic and pedestrian circulation within Hi-Crest is defined by a curvilinear street system that is inadequately meeting the needs of the mostly residential neighborhood. In addition, the neighborhood is woefully lacking in standard urban infrastructure. Large portions of the neighborhood have few or no sidewalks and the eastern one-third of the neighborhood has open drainage systems along most of the streets. Due to the widespread infrastructure deficiencies, the infrastructure needs within the whole neighborhood cannot be upgraded at once. Therefore, priority areas need to be set to target infrastructure improvements where it is most needed.

Sidewalk Priorities

Nearly the entire neighborhood lacks sidewalks. Therefore, sidewalk priorities should include areas that are important pedestrian linkages, which includes connecting schools, parks, commercial areas, bus routes, and other important destinations and anchors around the neighborhood. Sidewalks have been built along pedestrian routes to three schools within Hi-Crest. However, improvements should be made to improve these and other pedestrian routes. Below are specific recommendations for targeting improvements in Hi-Crest.

- **Adams Street Crosswalk**—Currently, there is no pedestrian crossing of Adams Street between 29th Street and 37th Street. There is a sidewalk from Avondale East along Golf Park that stops at Adams Street. Placing a crosswalk and flashing pedestrian crossing sign/signal along Adams Street at Golf Park would facilitate safer crossings for Avondale East students on the east side of Adams. An alternative crossing could be explored further south at 34th Street to accommodate Adams Park and in the event a new park or trailpath is developed west of Adams.

- **37th Street Sidewalk**—An important pedestrian route exists along 37th Street to the Kansas Avenue commercial area. Continuing the sidewalk along the north side of 37th Street from Humboldt Street to Kansas Avenue will provide pedestrians a better pathway from the neighborhood to the commercial area. This is also on the bus route.

- **Highland Crest Park-Fremont Hill**—Currently no connection exists between the Fremont Hill site and Highland Crest Park. Placing a wide sidewalk along Irvingham Street will provide a vital link in the neighborhood’s park and trail “system” once Fremont Hill is developed.

- **29th Street Sidewalk**—The sidewalk along the south side of 29th Street does not completely go through from Kansas Avenue to California Avenue. Building the segment of sidewalk along Shawnee Country Club will complete the sidewalk along 29th Street.
• **Ohio Avenue and Minnesota Avenue Walkway** – A new walkway on public right-of-way on the north side of the school district property between Ohio and Minnesota Avenues should be considered as this vacant land is developed. It would serve as a shortcut to Eisenhower Middle for students and serve as a mini-nature trail in Hi-Crest’s park and trail “system”.

• **Minnesota Avenue** – The sidewalk along western side of Minnesota Avenue serves the students who attend Eisenhower Middle School. However, this sidewalk does not continue all the way to 29th Street and is too narrow. The street is also narrow and unsafe considering the amount of buses and traffic to the school. Eliminating the ditches and widening the road with curb/gutter/sidewalk improvements would improve the safety of the route.

• **Other Priority Areas** – The other priority areas for sidewalks include along major north-south collector and arterial streets (Fremont, Kansas, Adams, Indiana, and California). These sidewalks will provide important linkages from the residential areas to the commercial district on 29th Street. In addition, placing sidewalk connections on all local streets to existing parks, parks, schools, bus lines, and anchor redevelopment areas are a priority.

### Street Priorities

The deficiencies of the streets in Hi-Crest are two-fold. The streets that have curbs and gutters are long, curvilinear streets, which are not conducive for creating social connectivity. On the other hand, the streets that follow the more traditional and pedestrian friendly grid system do not have curbs and gutters. To achieve the goal of providing modern infrastructure and public facilities that will increase Hi-Crest’s capacity for re-investment, improving the streets to make them safer, more pedestrian friendly, and creating blocks that foster social interaction are key. Below are specific recommendations for Hi-Crest excluding those already mentioned for anchor redevelopment areas:

• **Street Infrastructure Priorities** – Eliminating the “ditch” drainage systems and bringing the street up to present-day urban standards which incorporates installing curbs and gutters systems include:
  - 31st Street between Adams and Irvingham because it is expected to increase in usage with the new development in the Fremont Hill area.
  - Minnesota Avenue between 29th Street and 35th Street because it is heavily traveled due to its connections to Eisenhower Middle School.
  - Michigan Avenue between 29th Street and 32nd Street because it receives high traffic volumes due to United Methodist Church.
  - 35th Street between Indiana Avenue and Minnesota Avenue because of the higher traffic from Eisenhower Middle School.
  - 32nd Street between Indiana Avenue and California Avenue because it is the only direct cross street between those 2 major roads between 29th Street and 37th Street.

• **Traffic Calming** – Inserting traffic diverters in Hi-Crest West (see page 32).

• **Hi-Crest West Collector** – As Fremont Hill and other areas area redeveloped, several alternative collector streets should be considered for the western portion of Hi-Crest. (1) Fremont Street south from 29th Street to 33rd Terrace, to Girard
Street out to 37th Street, or (2) Fremont to 31st Street, west to Girard, south to 37th Street, or (3) Fremont Street south to Irvingham and easterly to Adams Street. The appropriate option will depend on implementation of the anchor redevelopment area proposals of the plan.

- **Bus Route** — Bus Route No. 8 winds its way through the entire neighborhood (see pg. 8). Potential changes should be considered to serve the Fremont Hill area as it is developed and as 31st Street is improved. East of Adams, Pinecrest Street would appear to serve the neighborhood better, but street widths are generally too narrow.

### E. Parks and Trails

The quality of life in Hi-Crest is directly influenced by the quality of the neighborhood’s environment, its scenic beauty, and the variety of its cultural and recreational opportunities available to area residents. Collectively, these resources not only contribute to the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of the neighborhood, but also greatly influence the perception of this neighborhood throughout the entire city.

According to the National Recreation and Parks Administrators, Hi-Crest should have 25 acres of neighborhood-sized parks (5 acres/1,000 population). The neighborhood currently has approximately 15 acres of parks, excluding the Landon Trail. However, a big chunk of the parkland, nearly 13 acres, is on the western edge of the neighborhood in Highland Crest Park. The central portion of the neighborhood has 2 parks each about an acre in size (Adams Park and Pinecrest Park). The eastern portion of the neighborhood has no parks although it should be noted that Ross Elementary and Eisenhower Middle School serve as de-factor parks. The biggest flaws to the existing parks in Hi-Crest are that they are neither centrally located nor easily accessible to large portions of the neighborhood. Therefore, an important component of this plan’s Land Use Goal is to integrate additional park space within the interior of the neighborhood that connects pedestrians to a park and trail “system”. The Hi-Crest Park “system” should consist of parks, trails, and other pathway connections to truly create a system of open space.

- **Highland Crest Park** — This park is significant in connecting the neighborhood’s system of parks and trails with the region’s system. The best inter-neighborhood connection to the Landon Trail is through Highland Crest Park. As proposed earlier, more than half of this park should be returned to native grasses/vegetation as part of a stream buffer for Butcher Creek. (see pg. 29)
- **New Fremont Hill Park** — This park will serve the new development on Fremont Hill and will be a passive park. (see pg. 28)
- **New Pinecrest/35th Street Park** — This park will provide a critical focal point as part of the 34th/Pinecrest/35th redevelopment area. (see pg. 31)
• **Adams Park** – This park should largely remain a passive park with limited play equipment due to its size and location besides Adams Street and several homes. A pedestrian-actuated crosswalk could be explored on Adams Street. If a new park is developed west of Adams, this park should be considered for disposal as a trade-off to balance park maintenance expenditures.

• **Pinecrest Park** – This park only has access from Pinecrest Drive which severely limits its service area because of the way streets are laid out. Providing a connection to Ohio Street through a pathway would open up this park to a much larger segment of the neighborhood.

• **Landon Trail** – The Landon Trail links the Hi-Crest park and trail “system” with the regional trail system. There are a number of options for connecting the trail to the neighborhood as previously discussed within Highland Crest Park. (see pg. 30) Other connections to the trail for the neighborhood are at 29th Street, 37th Street, and another possible connection at 33rd Terrace and Girard Street.

• **Easement Pathways** – Another pathway option is to install a pathway down the 30’ drainage/utility easement between 33rd Terrace and 34th Street, west of Adams Street. This pathway would provide an interior connection to Highland Crest Park/Landon Trail from Adams Street.

### F. Community Building

Community building is a key part of a neighborhood revitalization strategy because its focus is on making the neighborhood a stronger advocate for itself. Empowering the residents and institutions of a neighborhood with the notion they can foster change that impacts the neighborhood in a positive manner is one of the goals of community building. Some of the principles of community building are:

♦ Build on community strengths
♦ Support families and children
♦ Foster broad community participation
♦ Forge partnerships through collaboration
♦ Value cultural strengths

**Capacity**

Successful organizations have the wherewithal to succeed. A neighborhood’s ability to complete a competitive grant application, run successful meetings that are open to all citizens of the neighborhood, and complete projects in a timely manner demonstrates to decision makers and funding organizations that the neighborhood is serious about getting things done. Ideally, the neighborhood should function like a business. Below are strategies to increase organizational capacity.

♦ **Non-profit status:** The neighborhood should secure non-profit status. By organizing as a 501 (c) (3) the neighborhood will open many doors to additional funding sources that aren’t currently available. 501 (c) (3) groups are eligible to receive public and private grants. Individual donors to 501 (c) (3) groups can claim a federal income tax reduction of up to 50%.

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**Hi-Crest Neighborhood Plan**

June, 2003

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o **Neighborhood Assistant Consultant:** Housing and Neighborhood Development has hired a Neighborhood Assistant Consultant. The Neighborhood Assistant Consultant is available to help NIA’s recognize their organizational strengths and weaknesses. Hi-Crest is taking advantage of this resource as a means to building organizational capacity.

o **Education and Training:** NIA leaders should consider attending seminars and conferences that deal with community building, neighborhood revitalization, and other neighborhood issues. As an example, the Neighborhood Reinvestment Training Institute puts on a number of excellent training conferences each year. It is recommended that the NIA and the City explore ways to encourage neighborhood leaders to attend these conferences.

**Organizing**

An organized neighborhood can be a strong advocate for itself. A neighborhood that can show it is willing to stand up for itself is a neighborhood that can be a force for change. Bringing more people into the NIA is a key step toward successful revitalization. Listed below are a number of strategies for building organization within the neighborhood.

o **Strength in numbers:** When opportunities present themselves for the neighborhood to appear before decision makers, the neighborhood must be able to demonstrate a unified voice with a large number of people. The impact of this demonstration is very difficult for decision makers to ignore.

o **Social Activities:** Fun activities that bring neighbors together are an important element of a strong neighborhood. Hi-Crest should revive block parties as a means to get neighbors together.

o **Christmas in April:** The NIA should petition the Christmas in April organization to focus on a part of Hi-Crest each year to do an all-out housing rehabilitation blitz. This volunteer effort will demonstrate pride in the neighborhood and will encourage others to take ownership in their neighborhood.

o **Collaborate to form partnerships:** Building community requires work by all sectors — local residents, community-based organizations, businesses, schools, religious institutions, health and social service agencies — in an atmosphere of trust, cooperation and respect. It will take time and committed work to make this collaboration more than rhetoric.

**Public Safety**

A major goal of this Plan is to: create a safe, clean, and livable environment for all those in Hi-Crest to live, learn, work, and play. A crime problem is a multifaceted problem. There is no magic solution that is going to erase a crime problem. Implementing the
anchor redevelopment area concepts described in Section B will go a long way towards making Hi-Crest West unattractive for criminals. However, there are things that people can do to reverse the negative cycle and begin to reclaim their neighborhood.

- **Neighborhood Patrols:** The neighborhood should contact Safe Streets to help them set up a neighborhood patrol program. Stroll Patrols put people out walking the neighborhood. Neighborhood activity by residents discourages criminal activity.

- **Weed and Seed:** This is a participatory community development program that is a collaboration between the City of Topeka and the U.S. Department of Justice. The programs seeks to weed out crime and seed neighborhood revitalization. The western portion of Hi-Crest is part of one of the four target Weed and Seed areas in Topeka. The program focuses community and City resources to empower neighborhood residents and promote positive and long term change. The Weed and Seed strategy combines four elements; law enforcement, community policing, prevention/intervention/treatment services, and neighborhood restoration. Specifically in Hi-Crest, the Weed and Seed Program is supporting the following:
  - Enrichment learning and recreational programs at Avondale East Elementary School
  - Cool Summers Program at Avondale East Elementary (ages 6-12)
  - Youth personal development group
  - Computer training center at Avondale East Elementary
  - Summer Music, Art and Drama program, and Saturday tutoring and recreation program at Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church
  - Numerous neighborhood social events and neighborhood clean-ups
  - Improved lighting to discourage crime
  - Increase in police presence
  - Bring together neighborhood citizen to develop and implement revitalization plans

- **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED):** Safe Streets and the Police Department can help the neighborhood determine which property layouts in the neighborhood encourage crime. There are ways to design property and neighborhood layouts to help prevent criminal activity. For instance, the “5 & 2 rule” states that trees should be trimmed to at least 5 feet high and bushes should be trimmed to be no higher than 2 feet. Support adoption of Unified Development Code requiring CPTED principles be enforced for new development.

- **Neighbor to Neighbor:** The “broken windows” theory explains that little things such as a broken window or a unkempt porch at one property can leach out to other properties as people begin to feel that
no one cares about what’s going on. The problem will continue to grow block-by-block, street-by-street, until it “tips” and the whole neighborhood is suffering from an epidemic of decline. This “tipping point” can be avoided if attention is paid to the details. Volunteer “neighbor to neighbor” programs can address smaller housing maintenance issues – painting, porches, gutters, etc. – that prolong life of existing housing stock and prevent the “broken window” cycle.

- **Crime Free Multi-Housing Program**: The Topeka Police Department, Safe Streets, and the City’s code compliance program have teamed up to provide landlords with a free education in keeping their tenants safe and preventing crimes against their properties. The program uses a three-step process to help landlords and property managers make their properties secure, prevent and identify drug operators, screen tenants and learn about liability laws. The three steps landlords must take to earn certification as a Crime Free Multi-Housing property are to complete the eight-hour class, have a property inspection by code compliance services and police, and conduct a “Safety Social” for residents of the rental property at least once a year.

- **Clean-Ups** – The NIA should continue its neighborhood/ alley clean-up program and start an annual “trim-up” campaign (see pg.34). These clean-ups by the NIA are vital to avoiding environmental code problems as well as deterring crime by showing that residents care about the appearance of their neighborhood. Another program could be an “ugliest” yard clean up or neighborhood landscape contests.

- **Community Policing** – This vital program must be continued by the Topeka Police to maintain the gains made in recent years on ridding the neighborhood of serious drug activities. The individual contacts made by police officers and relationships made with the community are essential to the cooperation needed to ensure residents’ safety.

**Youth and Education**

Youth are critical for the ongoing revitalization of the neighborhood. As these children grow up and are forced with choices about where to live, they are going to be more inclined to stay in the neighborhood if they had good experiences growing up in a place that provided a positive environment. If Hi-Crest is “kid friendly”, it will have the two-fold benefit of attracting /retaining families in the short-term and becoming assets to the community in the long-term.

Avondale East, Ross, and Eisenhower Middle must continue working to be seen as successful both inside and outside its walls with the community. Some actions include:

- **Cool Summers Program** – This drop-in program at Avondale East is for ages 6-12 and sponsored by the City’s Parks and Recreation Department, Weed & Seed, and USD 501.
- **Safe Haven** – The Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church on Adams Street is designated by the Weed and Seed Program as a Safe Haven for the Hi-Crest
Neighborhood. The Safe Haven provides a variety of services, including: tutoring, instructing, and supervising youth, providing drug and alcohol abuse prevention and education, and coordinating computer skills training programs to name a few. The Safe Haven is open to all ages and conducts these programs on weekends, holidays, and summers. The Safe Haven also coordinates with Avondale East to continue some of their programs when the school is not open.

- **Clean-Ups** — Encourage youth to help with neighborhood clean-ups, particularly of the nearby nature areas like Butcher Creek, Highland Crest Park, and the Landon Trail. These activities are vital to connecting youth with their neighborhood and assisting with environmental education.

- **Community Gardens/Stream Buffers** — Encourage youth to participate with community garden and stream buffering projects. Community gardens are used as gardens, native tree and grasses restoration areas, playgrounds, classrooms, picnic sites, etc. Community gardens create beauty, security, and neighborliness and are an educational resources for youth. A visible stream buffer or floodplain area could be planned for tree “restoration” (e.g., gateway at 37th and Girard) and adopted by the school. The Water Pollution Control division of the City is a likely sponsor.

Adult education is also an issue in Hi-Crest. Needed by today’s employers are basic computer skills. Word processing has replaced typing as the most basic skills needed for office employment. Spreadsheets have replaced ledgers. In short, technology is now an ever-changing element in nearly every job available. Employees must be afforded the opportunity to gain and update computer skills in order to complete successfully in the workforce. Major nearby employers (Teletech and Jostens) could provide mentoring programs or host career fairs for school children and adults.
Implementation
VI. IMPLEMENTATION

“Doing is to planning as catching is to fishing”

Bruce W. McClendon, Mastering Change (1988)

As satisfying as fishing may be, it is not very meaningful unless a few good fish are brought home. Likewise, the process of doing a neighborhood plan may also be satisfying, but not very meaningful unless implemented. In this case, actions are analogous to fish – they need to be “caught” or implemented. The purpose of this section is to provide a framework for action that will lead to results in Hi-Crest over the next 10-15 years. The success, or lack thereof, of the Plan will be determined by the number of high priority actions implemented. This section should be used by all stakeholders to guide their decision-making in determining prioritization of actions.

A. Anchor Areas

Many of the recommendations in this plan fall into one of the geographic “anchor areas” described in the Section V (Revitalization Strategy). By combining several major actions within a concentrated area of a neighborhood, a greater cumulative impact can be realized than if they were dispersed throughout the larger planning area. The actions detailed below represent “major” actions or improvements for each area at build-out.

This targeted-comprehensive approach will be highly visible, leverage more private investment, build momentum, protect public investments, and accelerate the revitalization of the specific area. In this manner, it is intended that multiple target areas can be simultaneously being worked on in various stages of completion. Once the first area is “finished”, the majority of the public investment can then be shifted to the second area, then the third, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area #1 - Fremont Hill</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>1-5 Years</th>
<th>6-10 Years</th>
<th>11+ Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-Fill Housing (Botwin site) - 100 units/16 acres</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>CDBG/HOME/Tax Credits/HUD 202/Pvt</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-fill Housing (east of Fremont) - 130 units/32 acres</td>
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<td>Private/Tax Credits</td>
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<td>In-fill Housing (west of Fremont remainder, including redevelopment scenario) - 60 units/10 acres</td>
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<td>Private/Tax Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parks and Community Facilities</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fremont/31st Neighborhood Park</td>
<td>$45,500</td>
<td>Pvt/CIP/CDBG</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Native Grass Areas/Stream Buffering</td>
<td>operations</td>
<td>Parks/WPC</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Fremont East Open Space</td>
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<td>Community Center/Day Care</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fremont Street</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>CIP</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>31st Street (west of Fremont)</td>
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<td>31st Street (east of Fremont)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Streets/Sidewalks</td>
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<td>Private/ID</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extension of Water and Sewer Lines</td>
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<td>Private</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalk to Highland Crest Park – Irvingham (4')</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>CDBG</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Infill housing figures based on acquisition of all parcels, vacant and improved. Park costs reflect "development" costs assuming acquisition is accomplished through private dedications. Park development costs are based on $22,750/acre.

### Area #2 – Highland Crest Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehab Minor (6)</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td>CDBG/HOME</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehab Major (6)</td>
<td>$150,000</td>
<td>CDBG/HOME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infill (8)</td>
<td>$425,000</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parks</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Expansion – Acquisition/Demolition (Alt. A) or Park Expansion – Acquisition/Demolition (Alt. B)</td>
<td>$330,000</td>
<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Various Park Improvements (e.g., Soccer, Picnic Area, Play Area, Girard Entry, Parking)</td>
<td>$544,000</td>
<td>CDBG/CIP</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Native Grass Areas/Stream Buffering (6-8 ac.)</td>
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<td>CDBG/CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landon Trail Extension (concrete)</td>
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<td>CIP/KDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interior Park Trails</td>
<td>$287,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Bridge (Butcher Creek to Landon Trail)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks – Park side (6'); Curb Cut Closures</td>
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<td>CDBG/CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sidewalks – Residential side (4')</td>
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<td>CDBG/CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian/Park Lighting along Girard &amp; Irvingham</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Interior park improvements are dependent upon Landon Trail improvements and property acquisition/demolition of homes along Irvingham and Girard. Sidewalks and lighting on park side intended to proceed after demolition/acquisition. Any acquisition of homes for park purposes that involves relocation costs should utilize CIP funds first. Acquisition estimates are $5,500/unit (demolition, title, appraisal, inflation) + County Appraiser's value. Property values average $14,000/house. Relocation costs based on $15,000/occupied unit. Pedestrian lighting is estimated based on 75' spacing. Curb cut closures based on $1,000/unit.

### Area #3 – 34th/Pinecrest/35th Street

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing (Alternative &quot;A&quot;)</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rehab Minor (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rehab Major (5)</td>
<td>$125,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infill (30)</td>
<td>$1,500,000</td>
<td>CDBG/HOME/ Private</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parks</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Park Acquisition (Alt. A) or Park Acquisition (Alt. B)</td>
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<td>CIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Neighborhood Park @3.6 acres (Alt. A) or New Neighborhood Park @ 2.4 acres (Alt. B)</td>
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<td>CDBG/CDBG</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Neighborhood Park @3.6 acres (Alt. A)</td>
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<td>New Neighborhood Park @ 2.4 acres (Alt. B)</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Infrastructure (Alternative &quot;A&quot;)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emerson Street and Dupont Place Extension</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sidewalks @14,000 linear ft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alleys/New Drainage btwn 33rd Ter. &amp; 34th St.</td>
<td>$767,000</td>
<td>CIP</td>
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Traffic Diverters (3) $45,000 CIP/Weed
Pedestrian/Park Lighting Pinecrest and 35th $72,000 CIP

Notes: Any acquisition of homes for park purposes that involves relocation costs should utilize CIP funds first. Acquisition estimates are $5,500/unit (demolition, title, appraisal, inflation) + County Appraiser’s value. Property values average $14,000/house. Relocation costs based on $15,000/occupied unit. Street costs include right-of-way acquisition. Pedestrian lighting is estimated based on 75’ spacing.

Rehab minor = grants to property owners up to $10,000
Rehab major = gut rehab, garage and living space additions
Infill housing = acquisition, demolition (if needed), construction, sale to homeowner

Costs
Housing costs above represent subsidies from the City’s Consolidated Plan (CDBG/HOME) and are intended to leverage private dollars. They do not represent total development costs (including private funding), unless otherwise indicated. Costs for infrastructure and parks reflect project estimates funded by general obligation bonds within the City’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP), unless otherwise indicated.

Timing
Sequencing of the above actions (1-5 years, 6-10 year, 11+ years) are intended to reflect a preferred priority and not necessarily actual time lines. Actual time lines will be based on available resources and dependency on other actions. In the case of safety-related projects, those can be occurring at any point in the plan’s implementation and will naturally have more of a priority. Infrastructure projects should be sequenced to coincide with a particular development project and may be moved up or back depending on the timing. In terms of housing development, it is advisable to have the City acquire sites for new housing prior to the installation of new sidewalk and street improvements. This will discourage speculation by landowners, lower costs to the City or other developers for acquisition, and ensure that the City’s investment in infrastructure is capitalized on.

Alternative Funding Options
In order to achieve success in any of the designated anchor areas, substantial investments are necessary. It would not be too much of a stretch to say that some of the funding amounts appear to be unprecedented. However, these anchor areas are anticipated to be phased in over the next 15 years based on projected funding levels. If fiscal woes continue for state and local government, those initiatives will take longer to implement.

A current dilemma and major obstacle to implementing this plan is the issue of parks, trails, and open space maintenance. The City has reached a point where it is unable to accept the dedication of additional neighborhood park space without an increase in general fund revenues. A city-wide tax increase is one alternative which is not popular at the time. Another alternative funding method that should be considered is the creation of a special reinvestment fund as part of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). The NRP currently offers 95% rebates over 10 years on property tax increases as a result of a major improvement. If reauthorized at a lower rate or fewer years, a portion of the property tax increase could go into a special reinvestment fund that would support parks maintenance or other necessary improvements (housing, infrastructure, etc.). In this manner, increased tax revenues from improvements made within NRP neighborhoods could go back into the same or other NRP neighborhoods. The concept is not too different than tax increment financing (TIF) districts where future tax revenues help pay for infrastructure to
support a specific development. In fact, a special TIF district should be explored for any redevelopment along 29th Street corridor that might support streetscape improvements along that corridor. In any event, the inability to accept park, trail, and open space dedications and their ongoing maintenance will undermine all revitalization efforts for Hi-Crest West’s anchor areas.

(Re)Development Scenarios

In order to implement the development of infill housing in the designated anchor areas, a comprehensive approach is preferred as opposed to acquiring/developing one house at a time. While it is best to leverage private resources to (re)develop the anchor areas, it should be anticipated that public subsidies will be necessary to, at a minimum, acquire properties within the areas and demolish structures. Since a redevelopment authority does not exist in Topeka, the City of Topeka’s Housing and Neighborhood Development Department would likely be the implementer in acquisition and demolition. Vacant houses or land should be targeted first for acquisition that involves voluntary sales. Relocation of occupants should be kept to a minimum in order to avoid more expensive acquisitions. Once the larger “blocks” are acquired and assembled, the land should be offered to developers/builders/non-profits through a Request For Proposal process that involves the NIA’s participation.

B. Key Action Priorities

The community was surveyed at a May 19, 2003 meeting to determine their priorities for implementing specific strategies and actions of this plan. The actions below are organized based on the rankings received at that meeting (24 surveys completed) as well as the stakeholder meetings held since September 2002. They are not necessarily inclusive of all potential actions, but a checklist of some of the more major actions that should be undertaken. Each action was given a numerical score based on the letter ranking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A = Address these first before other actions (2.10 – 3.00)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Adopt Neighborhood Plan as part of the City/County Comprehensive Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grants/loans for homeowner remodeling/expansion (garages, basements, additions, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cooperative nuisance code enforcement w/landlords and NIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Crime-free multi-housing program (Police, Safe Streets)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Annual neighborhood “Trim-Up” (cut back trees and overgrown vegetation) and clean-up</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Nature area clean-ups (parks, trails, Butcher Creek, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Non-profit status for NIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Traffic diverters along Irvingham @ Pinecrest, 34th Street, and 33rd Terrace</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Rental Certificate Pilot Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Volunteer housing rehab parties for elderly homeowners (e.g., Christmas in April)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Weed and Seed (youth programs, social events, community police, safe haven)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B = Secondary in importance but still can be worked on (1.70 – 2.09)

- "Cool Summers" program at Avondale East
- Sidewalks – 37th Street (Girard to Kwik Shop)
- Redevelopment of Highland Crest Shopping Center
- T-Intersection at Fremont and 31st Street
- Botwin affordable housing development w/ hilltop park, community center, etc.
- Curbs/Gutters – east of Indiana (e.g. Minnesota Street)
- Sidewalk/Trail – on Irvingham linking Fremont Hill to Highland Crest Park
- Adams Street crosswalk w/ signal
- Highland Crest Park expansion; make visible to neighborhood; new entrance
- Eliminating Adams Park to afford new park(s) west of Adams.
- Community Gardens/Steam Buffering sponsored by students
- Convert easement between 33rd Terrace and 34th Street to lighted alley or pathway
- Add amenities to Highland Crest Park (soccer field, new play equipment, picnic area, etc.)
- 29th Street Streetscape Improvements
- Bus Route Changes
- K-State architecture students - rehab housing models

C = Hold off until more of A and B get accomplished (1.00 – 1.69)

- Sidewalks – west of Adams
- Sidewalks – east of Indiana
- Central dumpster for landlords
- New and rehabilitated homes fronting park on Girard and Irvingham
- Pedestrian bridge connecting park to Landon Trail
- Sidewalks – between Adams and Indiana
- New homes fronting new park and new streets; new sidewalks and alley at 34th/Pinecrest/35th Street
- Feasibility Study for area east of Fremont (geologic/environmental)
- Prairie grass restoration w/ walking trails in Highland Crest Park
- Concrete Landon Trail
- Other Park Improvements (Adams Park, Pinecrest Park)
- Pedestrian link to Pinecrest Park

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Appendix
Criteria Used to Evaluate Exterior Housing Defects

**Minor Defects** - deficiencies corrected during the course of regular maintenance.

- Missing shrubbery or bare spots on lawn, trash and garbage accumulation.
- Deteriorated or lacking window screens.
- Weathered paint, minor painting needed.
- Cracked window panes, loose putty.
- Wear on or light damage to steps, window and door sills, frames and porches.
- Weathering of mortar and small amounts of loose, missing material between bricks.
- Handrails deteriorated or missing.
- Missing splash blocks at foot of down spouts.
- Lacking porch lights.

**Intermediate Defects** - deficiencies serious enough to require more extensive repair than required by regular maintenance.

- Gutters or drain spouts rotten or parts missing.
- Sagging, cracked, rotted or missing roofing, overhang or lattice work.
- Foundation or bearing walls cracked or sagging or with loose, missing material.
- Erosion of landscape due to improper drainage, abandoned vehicle, cracked or uneven sidewalks.
- Deteriorated fencing with loose or missing material.
- Rotted, cracked or sagging porches, columns, door frames and stairways.
- Cracked or missing material from chimney.
- Broken or missing window panes and/or rotted window sills.
- Peeling or cracked paint, complete painting needed.
- Damaged or missing air vents in foundation.

**Major Defects** - condition of structural components which can be corrected only by major repairs.

- Holes, open cracks, rotted or missing material in foundations, walls, roofing, porches, columns, etc.
- Sagging or leaning of any portion of house indicating insufficient load bearing capacity: foundation, walls, porches, chimneys.
- Defective conditions caused by storms, fires, floods, or land settlements.
- Inadequate or poor quality material not used in permanent construction.
- Inadequate conversion for use involved.
- Major deteriorated or dilapidated out building or garage.
- Evidence of a lack of, or inadequate, indoor plumbing such as no roof vents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buildings/Properties</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound</td>
<td>No major defects with no more than 1 intermediate defect and less than 5 minor defects. (3 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>No major defects with 2 or more intermediate defects; no major defects with 1 intermediate defect and 5 or more minor defects. 1 major defect with no intermediate or multiple minor defects (2 points)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deteriorated</td>
<td>1 or more major defects in combination with 1+ intermediate defects. (1 point)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Blocks                  |                                                                           |
| Sound                  | Average 2.7 – 3.0 points per block                                         |
| Minor Deterioration     | Average 2.4 – 2.69 points per block                                         |
| Intermediate Deterioration | Average 2.1 – 2.39 points per block                                         |
| Major Deterioration     | Average less than 2.09 points per block                                     |