

SECTION VIII

GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The comprehensive plan for the community is represented by the accumulative recommendations contained in the detailed planning studies presented earlier. Together, the effects of the planning process create an overall picture of the potential physical characteristics of the community toward the end of the planning period, which is termed the General Development Plan. The long-range comprehensive plan for the Clearwater community is illustrated on the following figure.

The plan is a general guide to the orderly growth and development of the City and should be considered a framework around which the future community may be fabricated. Planning is intended to be used as a guide in providing for community needs that cannot be provided on an individual and uncoordinated basis.

The plan is intended to enhance the group interests of the public. The interests of any single individual should not be paramount when considering the relative merits of any aspect of the plan.

The completed and properly adopted comprehensive plan is a statement of policy setting forth the kind of community desired in the future. It is the objective of the plan to achieve a harmonious, well-balanced development without compromising those factors which have been representative for community growth and development.

CURRENT AND FUTURE GROWTH PATTERNS

As shown on the General Development Plan, anticipated future municipal expansion patterns include additional residential development toward the east and north with limited commercial expansion near the railroad in the northeastern flank area, with continuing industrial infill near the railroad on the west and northeast. As shown on the following figure, these patterns reflect continuation of the general development trends of recent years. Due to the extensive floodplain of the Ninnescah and its tributaries, future urban expansion will be severely limited toward the south, southeast, southwest and west.

Within these overall patterns, the plan anticipates continuing community enlargement fueled by population growth, improving economic conditions and mounting desire of families in the Wichita metroplex to relocate to smaller more rural communities. Over the course of the 20-year planning period, the plan anticipates improvements, extensions and alterations in the detailed characteristics of most aspects of the physical configuration of the City. Such alterations in physical configuration will in turn result in requirements for modifications, improvements, and extensions of the existing infrastructure systems currently serving the community.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The planning directions developed in the various planning studies were tempered by a series of goals and objectives statements developed by the Planning Commission at the outset of the comprehensive planning process. These statements about desired future conditions encompassed all aspects of community development from economic development to industrial expansion and environmental quality. Together, the formal goals and objectives constitute a framework for guiding continuous community development toward maintenance of a high quality living environment for all citizens.

The goals and objectives are supplemented by a series of minimum planning standards which provide basic quality parameters for major aspects of community development. While the goals and objectives outline future conditions to be achieved, the planning standards set out minimum guidelines for gauging the quality of development, and the adequacy of the major processes and facilities which will be required to serve the future community.

BACKGROUND FOR PLANNING

The study of background conditions provides a review of existing physical circumstances which have shaped historic patterns of community development and which will continue to impact and influence all aspects of urban development in the future. Such constant influences as location, climate, soils, topography, water resources and social history have combined to produce the present physical and demographic characteristics of the community.

The background studies show that the City of Clearwater is located within the valley of the Ninnescah River and is affected by its associated floodplain. The river valley aquifer yields abundant water to local wells, however, some locations evidence varying degrees of hardness. Local topography exhibits moderate rise from the valley floor providing opportunity for future urban expansion above the floodplain, particularly toward the north and northeast. Overall, the background studies show that while some degree of constraint for development will always be present, through proper planning, such impediments need not limit the future growth potential of the community.

POPULATION

Population estimates together with land use studies comprise a basis for projection of future community development on a reasonable scale. From these studies and projections, future need for housing, schools, goods and services, and utilities may be anticipated. Based on historical patterns, current indications and expectation of some degree of economic expansion in the years to come, the planning studies indicate the potential for population growth up to 70 percent or more during the 20-year planning period depending upon prevailing economic conditions. Both internal and external influences will impact population levels in the community during the planning period. Many of these are within the influence of the City, particularly those tied to the local businesses and industries, and upon the ability of the City to create and maintain a municipal environment in which people will want to live and work. This has been a positive factor in the past, however, additional effort will be required to sustain the full range requirements of populations approaching the higher levels envisioned by the estimates.

LAND USE

Patterns of urban uses of land are the primary indicators of the overall physical configuration of the future community toward the end of the planning period. The anticipated spatial arrangement of future land use patterns in and around the Clearwater community is illustrated on the General Development Plan. The present community contains about 610 acres of developed land. By the year 2025, it is estimated that developed land acreage will have expanded to over 1,000 acres. It is important that the best practice be utilized in developing new land areas and that all development be coordinated with each element of the comprehensive plan.

Overall, the growth projections depicted on the plan indicate continued expansion in all directions, with major growth areas toward the north and on the eastern flanks of the community. While the greatest acreage expansion is expected in the residential land uses, moderate growth is also predicted for commercial and industrial purposes. As the community continues to expand, it will become increasingly important to conserve and protect natural drainage features and to promulgate patterns of development which will remain in harmony with the surrounding natural environment.

HOUSING

The detailed studies of the community housing stock show that of the 811 existing units, over 87 percent represent conventional single-family housing, and that over 97 percent are in basically sound condition, characteristics which are expected to prevail to some extent throughout the planning period. If the community grows as expected, up to 722 or more new housing units of all types will likely be required by the year 2025.

Newly developing residential areas should be planned as extensions of existing neighborhoods to maximize the opportunity for development of cohesive community units designed for family living. Neighborhood playlots may be needed in the developing residential areas on the flanks of the community. These areas will be somewhat remote from existing parks and school playgrounds.

The internal street system of the neighborhood should be designed so that through traffic will be discouraged from traversing residential areas. Streets should be located so that traffic will be distributed from the internal system of local streets to the collector and arterial network.

Although development and maintenance of safe, decent and sanitary housing are greatly stimulated by responsive government programs, the long-range success of the overall housing effort is directly dependent upon maintenance of neighborhoods in a condition which will encourage owners of deteriorating buildings to repair or replace them. A quality neighborhood is the product of housing improvement activities coupled with good landscaping, well-maintained lawns and street, trees, curbs and gutters, paved streets, off-street parking, proper signage, adequate drainage and proper enforcement of municipal codes and ordinances. Together, these influences result in pleasant and healthful surroundings and beneficial environment in which to live and work.

TRANSPORTATION

The Clearwater community has available rail and highway transportation, and has access to commercial air transport at nearby Wichita. While all forms of transportation, including technological means such as pipelines and electric lines, will continue to be of importance in the community growth pattern, the most important of the currently available systems will continue to be the major street system as it will in one way or another, directly impact every citizen and business in the community.

Based on field survey data, the Clearwater community currently contains nearly 20 miles of platted streets and alleys, of which total approximately 18 miles are open for use. Within the system, there are currently over 4 miles of arterial and collector streets. If the City realizes its potential for growth, there will be a long-range need for up to 5 miles of additional major streets in order to properly serve new expansion areas while promoting a cohesive and functional major street system in and around the current and future community.

The General Development Plan shows that the proposed major street system will compliment existing development patterns, while providing needed major access routes for areas of continuing urban expansion. The plan contemplates significant street expansions on the northeast flank of the City, which is reflective of the latest development trends and the long-range growth directions anticipated by the Future Land use Plan. If the proposed plan is to be successful, the traffic carrying capacity of each street should be protected by regulating adjacent land uses, preventing excessive entrances on the street, and applying appropriate traffic engineering techniques to achieve optimum utilization characteristics. The functional integrity of existing and future street systems are also significantly benefited by application of appropriate land use controls through the process of zoning and subdivision review.

Implementing the major street plan is largely an administrative process oriented toward preserving the necessary right-of-way and segmentally developing the system over a long period of time. Where right-of-way route segments will be required for extension of major streets, land reservations should be made at an early date.

Overall, the existing City street system is in sound condition and well maintained. In the years ahead, the community should continue to pursue an aggressive street program both for maintenance and for development of new streets in expansion areas. Such a program should include the available means for review of streets as a function of platting practice, and for reservation of rights-of-way for future major streets. These measures, together with continued review of changing needs for marking, signage and signalization on the existing system, will result in continued functional adequacy with reduced congestion and hazard in all areas of the community throughout the 20-year planning period.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Prominent among the influences responsible for the formation of cities is a wide range of public amenities commonly called community facilities. These facilities include water and sewer systems; libraries and city halls; public parks; and a number of similar considerations which could not be available on an individual or uncoordinated basis. It is important that these facilities be located and sized so as to provide maximum benefit to current and future community populations.

At the present time, the Clearwater community contains upwards of 25 public and quasi-public facilities which provide for the daily well-being of the residents of the City. The background research indicates that while most such facilities are generally adequate for service to present population levels, it will become increasingly necessary to upgrade and renew most amenities on a continuing basis to remain current with changing demand and public expectation about quality of service. In this context, it will be particularly important to plan improvements in scale with the population to be served.

Many of the future modifications and expansions of the community facilities will be provided in response to demands arising from continued growth in the population base. Additionally, there will be a continuing requirement for new and improved systems to replace older obsolete facilities in existing areas of the community which may fail to provide satisfactory service at some point during the planning period.

Public agencies which provide the various community services are responsible for the location, size and kind of buildings necessary to suit the particular requirements for the conduct of the several government functions.

State legislation provides the Planning Commission with some discretion as to where and how a proposed facility can be located, provided that a duly adopted comprehensive plan exists. These facilities may range from an electric power substation to a school building or any kind of public structure. Through these legislative means, which requires Planning Commission review of proposals for facilities of a type covered by the plan, community directions are assured of the widest possible opportunity for public review and comment.

CONTINUING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The planning studies and assessments of community facilities utilize a series of analyses, forecasts and delineations of expected future growth potential which, in the aggregate, indicate the potential for moderate growth in all aspects of the Clearwater community over the course of the 20-year planning period. To a significant degree, the ultimate quality and utility of the future community will depend on the policies, controls and actions of the City in guiding future growth and expansion toward development patterns which are consistent and harmonious with the present community and which will contribute to an orderly and economical growth patterns.

As more modern development concepts are put into practice, it is probable that the overall development practice will trend away from traditional lot and block design patterns and begin a transition to an increasingly irregular delineation which will be more adaptable to modern technologies and the surrounding natural environment. This will ultimately benefit the entire community through a diminished requirement for neighborhood streets and an overall diminishing per capita fossil fuel requirement.

The long-range planning directions developed through the comprehensive review and analysis process are not intended as hard dictations carrying the force of the law. In practice, if the planning directions and concepts are to remain viable throughout the planning period, there must be a continuing program of updating and change in order for the planning concepts to remain in correspondence with emerging technologies and social attitudes. The planning concepts and directions in the aggregate are intended to provide an overall guide which can further the common objective of continued urban development on a rational and planned basis.

If the process of long-range planning is to be successful, actual patterns of continuing development must carefully reflect the policies, attitudes, goals and objectives developed in the plan. Since the plan itself is not a legally binding instrument, it is essential that appropriate legislation be prepared, adopted and enforced to transform the general policies into regulations and actions which do have legal substance. It is through these means that the plan will function in the public interest to influence and guide the patterns and overall quality of future development.