

*Chapter 8:
Economic Development Strategies*



*MIDWEST CITY, OKLAHOMA
Comprehensive Plan 2008*

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Introduction

To the average citizen, the concept of economic development can be difficult and ambiguous to understand because the topic spans a broad range of issues. In fact, many definitions of economic development exist. However, economic development generally can be summarized as an effort to create and retain jobs in a given area (such as a city, county, or state) in order to improve the quality of life.

There are three basic targets of economic development programming:

- 1) **Existing business/industry** – this refers to efforts aimed at the retention and increased viability of existing local businesses.
- 2) **New business/industry** – this refers to efforts aimed at the creation of new business activity within a community, as measured by increases in employment and expansion of the tax base.
- 3)
- 4) **Outside investment** – this refers to efforts aimed at attracting people into the community to spend money locally.

The purpose of this chapter is to help relate the City's economic development efforts to the City's Comprehensive Plan. This chapter will address how these three facets of economic development relate to Midwest City's current efforts and will offer a variety of economic development recommendations.

Economic Development Description:

Economic development is the process that influences growth and restructuring of an economy to enhance economic well-being. We experience economic growth when our standard of living is rising. Rather than being a simplistic process, economic development typically is a range of influences aimed at achieving objectives like creating jobs and wealth and improving quality of life. It incorporates coordinated initiatives targeted at expanding infrastructure and increasing the volume and/or quality of goods and services by a community.

Source: Enterprise Franklin Website

Review of the Goal & Objectives

The *Goals and Objectives* from Chapter 2 of this Comprehensive Plan provided the necessary direction to form the recommendation within this chapter. The *Goals and Objectives* establish a basis from which recommendations may be made. The following goal and objectives were developed to enhance the quality of life experienced by residents of Midwest City:

- **Goal 12:** Provide a stable, high quality economic environment that focuses on providing current and future residents of the City a high quality of life.
 - **Objective 12.1:**
 - Be a “business advocate” to assist developers and/or business owners with navigating the development review process or other City processes.
 - **Objective 12.2:**
 - Establish high standards for the development of non-residential uses. Such standards should be responsive to the market and economic development needs of the community.
 - **Objective 12.3:**
 - Identify specific areas of the City where key image enhancement should occur.
 - **Objective 12.4:**
 - Promote the creation of primary jobs (defined as jobs that export goods and services outside the region and in turn bring money into the local/regional economy).
 - **Objective 12.5:**
 - Increase the amount of high-paying jobs within the City.
 - **Objective 12.6:**
 - Develop a target business list.
 - **Objective 12.7:**
 - Develop business retention strategies.

Economic Characteristics

Industry Information

Table 8-1 depicts the different industries in which Midwest City's workforce is employed. This table also compares Midwest City to the peer cities. In Midwest City, most of the workforce is employed in the *Educational, Health and Social Services* field, which employs 19.3 percent or 4,644 people. This category is slightly lower for the City than the average of the peer cities, which is 22.7 percent. The second largest category for the City is the *Public Administration* field at 15.9 percent, which is higher than average for the peer cities, which is 6.9 percent. Only the City of Choctaw, with 19.4 percent, had a higher percentage of people employed within this industry. *Retail Trade* is the third largest category in the City and employs 11.4 percent of the City's workforce. The smallest industry category is the *Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining* industry, with 1.0 percent, or 236 people, employed. Two industries, the *Information* industry and the *Wholesale Trade* industry, tied for the second smallest industry, with approximately 2.5 percent of the City's employment.



Illustration 8-1
IMAGES FROM THE TINKER BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL PARK

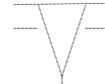
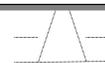
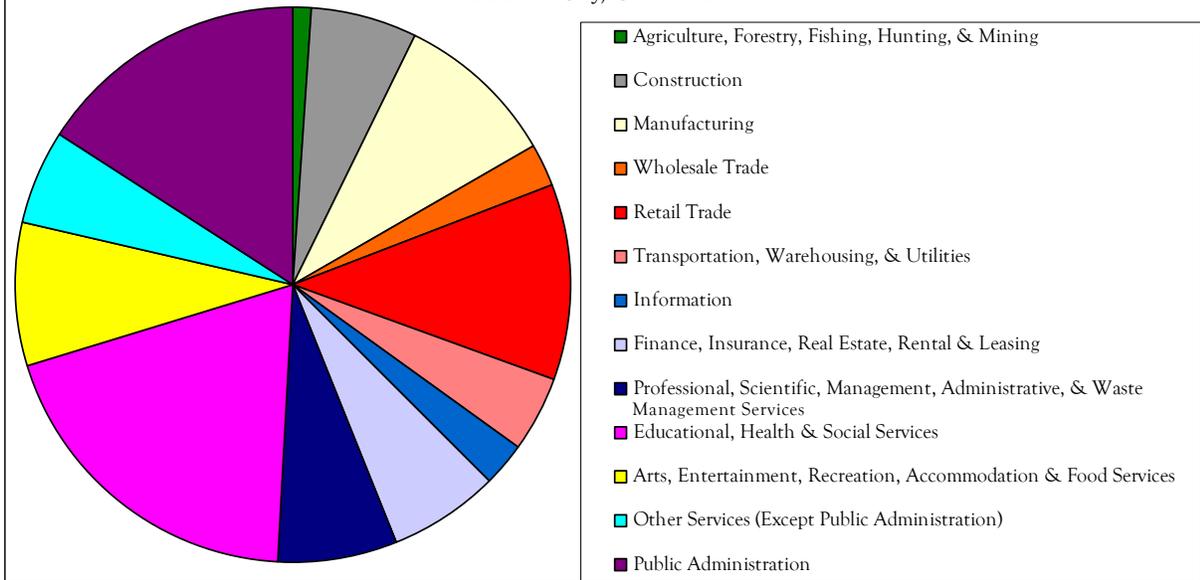


Table 8-1
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY CATEGORY
Midwest City, Oklahoma

Industry	MWC	Broken Arrow	Choctaw	Del City	Edmond	Moore	Nicoma Park	Norman	Spencer
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	1.0%	1.0%	1.1%	0.8%	2.6%	0.8%	0.8%	1.4%	0.0%
Construction	6.2%	5.4%	7.0%	6.8%	4.9%	6.5%	12.3%	5.2%	5.6%
Manufacturing	9.5%	11.5%	11.8%	11.1%	6.4%	11.7%	6.6%	7.0%	13.3%
Wholesale trade	2.5%	4.8%	4.0%	4.3%	4.4%	4.1%	3.2%	2.4%	2.6%
Retail trade	11.4%	13.6%	10.5%	12.9%	11.9%	12.7%	10.7%	12.1%	12.7%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	4.4%	8.1%	5.5%	4.8%	3.3%	6.1%	4.8%	3.6%	5.4%
Information	2.5%	5.0%	1.8%	3.0%	3.9%	2.7%	1.8%	3.0%	2.0%
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	6.3%	7.8%	6.6%	7.1%	9.2%	5.6%	5.0%	5.2%	6.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, & waste management services	7.0%	9.9%	5.8%	7.2%	9.9%	7.8%	5.1%	9.3%	7.2%
Educational, health and social services	19.3%	18.7%	17.2%	16.8%	23.9%	18.0%	19.0%	28.6%	21.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	8.3%	6.0%	4.8%	7.6%	7.9%	6.8%	9.2%	11.1%	4.7%
Other services (except public administration)	5.6%	5.6%	4.6%	5.7%	5.1%	5.5%	7.4%	4.9%	6.9%
Public administration	15.9%	2.4%	19.4%	11.9%	6.5%	11.6%	14.0%	6.3%	12.0%
Total Persons Employed	24,015	38,764	4,812	9,413	35,062	20,212	1,089	49,568	1,455

(1) Percent of Total Persons Employed
 Source: U.S. Census

Figure 8-1
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORY: 2000
Midwest City, Oklahoma



Location Quotient

Now that industries have been identified in **Table 8-1**, it is important to establish a method to evaluate the significance of each industry for Midwest City. A review of the location quotients (LQs) from different industries can assist in identifying which industries are export industries within the community. Generally, export industries infuse new dollars into the local economy by creating or selling a product or service that is ultimately exported to regional, statewide, national, or international markets. Examining export industries provides insight into a community's ability for economic expansion and population growth. The development of export industries is the only real way for a local economy to grow. Such industries bring new money into the local economy (as opposed to retailing money that may be already in the community). The following figure, **Figure 8-2**, defines the LQ and explains how the LQ is calculated:

Figure 8-2
DETERMINING LOCATION QUOTIENT (LQ)

A location quotient compares the amount of employment in an industry within a region to the amount of employment in that industry within the nation as a whole. If an industry in a region employs a greater ratio of people in the region than does the nation as a whole then it is presumed that the industry in that region must be exporting its product.

- If the ratio is greater than 1 the industry is an export industry.
- If the ratio is equal or close to 1 the industry is self-sufficient within the community.
- If the ratio is less than 1 the industry is an import industry.

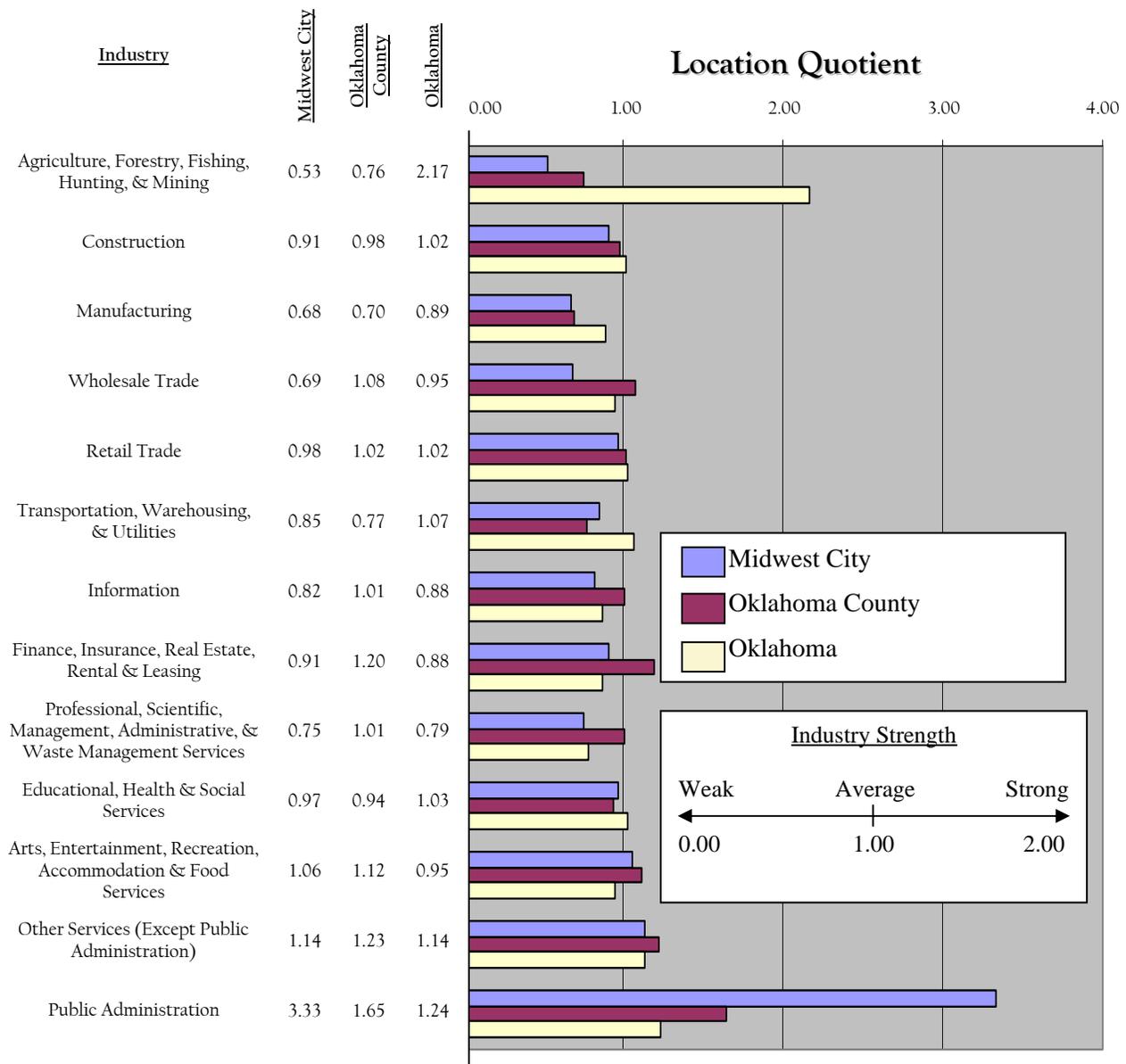
Example LQ =

$$\frac{\% \text{ of local employment in industry (X)}}{\% \text{ of national employment in industry (X)}}$$

Figure 8-3, on the following page, displays the location quotients (LQs) for Midwest City, Oklahoma County and the State of Oklahoma. The Midwest City industry with the greatest LQ is the *Public Administration* field with a 3.33

LQ. This indicates that this field has a larger share of the City’s employment compared proportionally to the country as a whole. In addition, Oklahoma County and the State also had high LQs (1.65 and 1.24 respectively) for this field. The second highest industry is the *Other Services* industry, with an LQ of 1.14 (refer to following section for a listing of the type of jobs within this industry). The only other industry with an LQ higher than one (1.0) is the *Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services* industry with a 1.06 LQ.

Figure 8-3
LOCATION QUOTIENT (LQ)
Midwest City, Oklahoma County, and the State of Oklahoma



Industry Examples

The following listings are examples of employment types that can be found within industries that had an LQ score greater than one (1.0) and are thus export industries.

- Employment Areas within the “Public Administration” Field
 - General government and support
 - National security and international affairs
 - Executive offices and legislative bodies
 - Public finance activities
 - Justice, public order, and safety activities
 - Administration of human resource programs
 - Administration of environmental quality and housing programs
 - Administration of economic programs and space research

- Employment Areas within the “Other Services” Field
 - Automotive repair and maintenance
 - Electronic and precision equipment repair and maintenance
 - Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment repair and maintenance
 - Personal and household goods repair and maintenance
 - Religious organizations
 - Business, professional, political, and similar organizations
 - Footwear and leather goods repair
 - Beauty salons
 - Dry cleaning and laundry services
 - Labor unions
 - Other personal services

- Employment Areas within the “Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation & Food Services” Field
 - Accommodation and food services
 - Traveler accommodation
 - Recreational vehicle parks and camps, and rooming and boarding houses
 - Restaurants and other food services
 - Independent artists, performing arts, spectator sports, and related industries
 - Museums, art galleries, historical sites, and similar institutions
 - Bowling centers

Table 8-2, below, displays the location quotients (LQs) for Midwest City and its peer communities, as defined in the *Baseline Analysis*. As can be seen in the table, the *Public Administration* industry is the largest industry for most peer cities. Notably, export industries (industries with an LQ greater than 1) can vary from city to city.

Industry	MWC	Broken Arrow	Choctaw	Del City	Edmond	Moore	Nicoma Park	Norman	Spencer
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, and mining	0.53	0.55	0.61	0.44	1.41	0.43	0.44	0.75	0.00
Construction	0.91	0.80	1.03	1.00	0.73	0.96	1.81	0.76	0.82
Manufacturing	0.68	0.82	0.83	0.79	0.46	0.83	0.47	0.49	0.95
Wholesale trade	0.69	1.34	1.10	1.21	1.22	1.13	0.89	0.67	0.73
Retail trade	0.98	1.16	0.90	1.10	1.01	1.09	0.91	1.03	1.08
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	0.85	1.56	1.06	0.93	0.63	1.17	0.92	0.69	1.03
Information	0.82	1.63	0.59	0.98	1.28	0.87	0.60	0.96	0.65
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental, and leasing	0.91	1.14	0.95	1.03	1.33	0.82	0.72	0.76	0.89
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	0.75	1.06	0.62	0.78	1.06	0.84	0.55	1.00	0.78
Educational, health and social services	0.97	0.94	0.86	0.84	1.20	0.90	0.95	1.43	1.08
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1.06	0.76	0.61	0.96	1.00	0.87	1.17	1.40	0.59
Other services (except public administration)	1.14	1.16	0.94	1.16	1.05	1.14	1.53	1.00	1.41
Public administration	3.33	0.49	4.04	2.48	1.36	2.43	2.93	1.32	2.50
Total Persons Employed	24,015	38,764	4,812	9,413	35,062	20,212	1,089	49,568	1,455

Source: U.S. Census

Current Economic Development Efforts

Chamber of Commerce

The Midwest City Chamber of Commerce is one of the most important organizations for the economic development of the City. Its main goal is to support existing businesses, attract new businesses, and to increase the overall quality of life in the City. The Chamber operates primarily on funds from its member organizations and from limited public financing, such as hotel taxes (based on a contract with the City), for economic development efforts. Currently, the Chamber has developed numerous programs that benefit and promote the City. The following is a partial list of a few programs and activities that the Chamber has developed:

- An annual “Experience the New Midwest City VIP Tour”
- Multimedia public relations campaign
- “East Is In!” marketing campaign
- Midwest City Economic Outlook
- Midwest City Commercial Property Guide
- MRO and aerospace partnership

Special Incentive and Business Assistance Zones

The City has four types of special incentive and business assistance zones. These zones are designed to promote quality of life issues by attracting employers and new businesses to the area. The following is a brief synopsis of each of the four zones (refer to **Plate 8-1**, Special Incentive District Map, for a graphic representation):

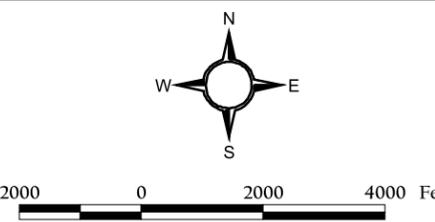
- **Enterprise Zones** - Designated in disadvantaged counties, cities, or portions of cities, these zones provide financial incentives for businesses, such as tax credits, tax exemptions, and low interest loans.
- **HUB Zones** - These zones establish areas where federal contracting opportunities exist for qualified small businesses.
- **New Market Tax Credit Program** - The intent of this program is to encourage investment in areas of a community. This program allows investors to receive tax credits for their investments in areas designated as low-income or economically disadvantaged.
- **Oklahoma Opportunity Zone** - The State of Oklahoma offers financial incentives to stimulate economic growth. Specifically, this program allows businesses to use the State’s Smaller Employer Quality Jobs Incentive Act.



Plate 8-1
Special Incentive
District Map
Interstate 40 -
Tinker Air Force
Base
 Midwest City, Oklahoma

Midwest City, Oklahoma

-  Oklahoma State Enterprise Zone Designation
-  New Markets Tax Credit Eligible Area
-  HUBZone Empowerment Contracting Program Area
-  Oklahoma State Opportunity Zone

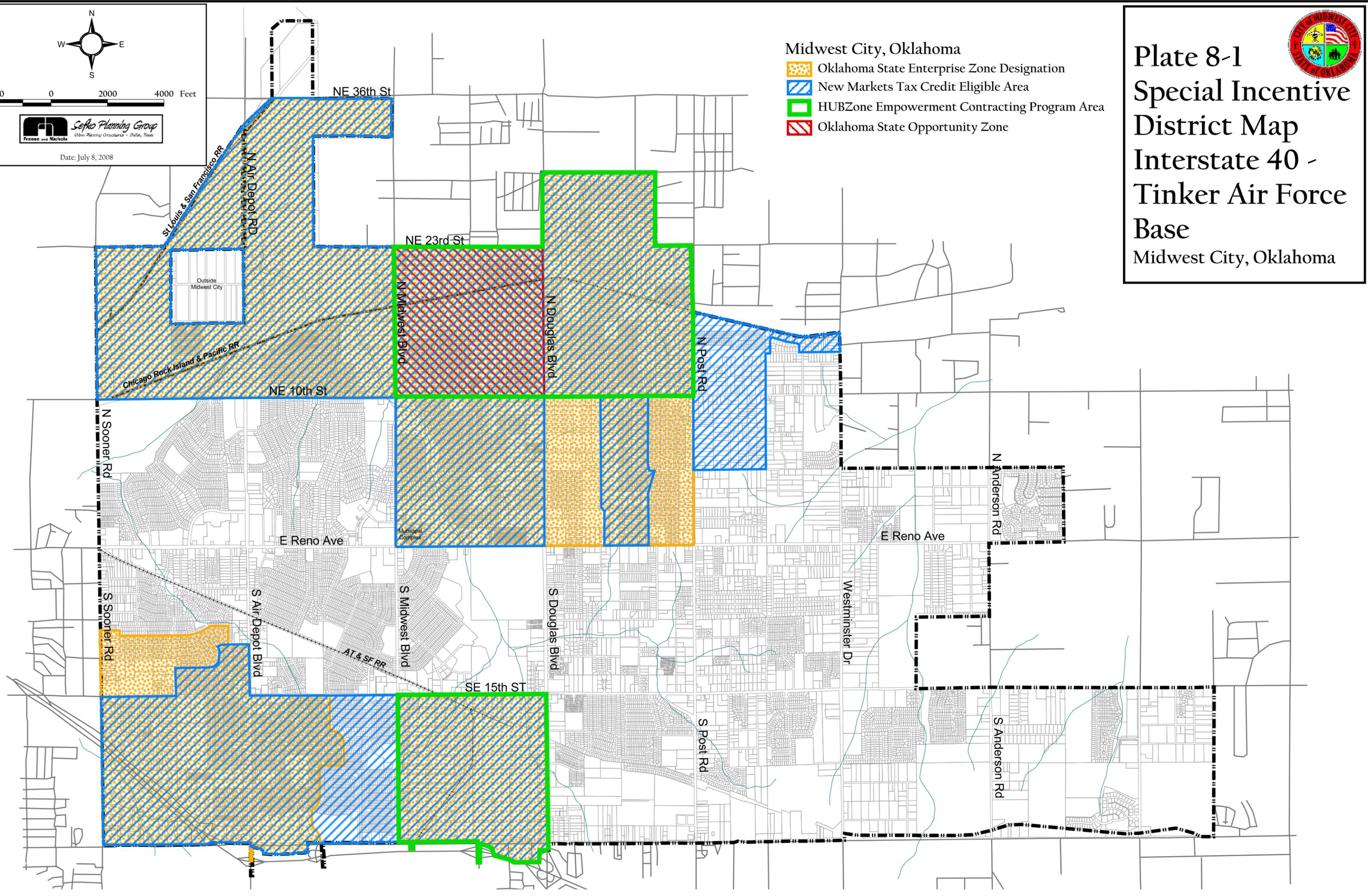


2000 0 2000 4000 Feet



Seftko Planning Group
 Urban Planning Consultants • Dallas, Texas

Date: July 8, 2008



29th Street/Downtown Redevelopment Project (Town Center)

One of the most significant economic development efforts in Midwest City is the 29th Street/Downtown Redevelopment Project. Specifically, the 29th Street/Downtown Redevelopment Project encompasses 90 acres along SE 29th Street, near the intersection with I-40. The development is a retail center for Midwest City and the region. It is designed to have “New Urbanism” components, which generally means a development that is visually appealing, human-scaled, and reminiscent of early twentieth century downtowns. Currently entering the third phase of its development, the 29th Street/ Downtown Redevelopment Project (Town Center) is anchored by a Lowe’s Home Improvement Center and a Target store. The acquisition and demolition costs have been estimated at \$21 million with construction costs estimated at \$50 million. The Town Center is estimated to create approximately 500 new jobs. According to the Midwest City Chamber of Commerce, “The overriding objective of the redevelopment is to create a high intensity, predominantly retail development that will enhance the image of the community and provide an attractive Town Center element that will stand the test of time.”¹



Illustration 8-2
29TH STREET/DOWNTOWN
REDEVELOPMENT (September 2005)

East Is In!

The “East Is In!” marketing campaign is targeted at promoting eastern Oklahoma County, including Midwest City, throughout the Central Oklahoma Region and beyond. The Chamber has developed this program and has successfully brought attention to the City through this marketing effort. “East Is In!” promotes both the residential and non-residential qualities of Midwest City.

Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) and Aerospace Partnership

The maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) and aerospace partnership is designed to promote businesses involved with aircraft maintenance, repair, and

¹ Midwest City Chamber of Commerce, *Economic Outlook – Fiscal Year 2005*, pg. 10

overhaul MRO and other aerospace and non-aerospace enterprises. This partnership is possible due to the existence of Tinker Air Force Base, which is a major site for the maintenance, repair, and overhaul of military aircraft. Many private businesses contract with the military to perform the maintenance, repair, and overhauls of aircraft.

The Midwest City Chamber of Commerce has been the lead organization in developing this partnership. The following are the main objectives of the MRO and aerospace partnership:²

- Support growth and profitability for existing MRO and aerospace businesses.
- Recruit new MRO and aerospace missions and contractors to the area.
- Promote access to new business opportunities for non-MRO and aerospace businesses as contractors or subcontractors for government and/or private sector MRO and aerospace projects.
- Serve as a forum for issues affecting Eastern Oklahoma County's MRO and aerospace industry.

Hospitality District

The City's Hospitality District is one of the most visible and dynamic parts of the City. Located to the north of Interstate 40, east of Sooner Road, the district serves as a gateway into the City. Since a tornado destroyed much of the area in 1999, Midwest City has seen substantial investment in the Hospitality District. Over \$60 million in projects have been announced. Notably, the Reed Center, a 60,000 square foot conference center, serves as an anchor for the district. Additionally, with multiple new hotels having over 760 rooms available, the district is a major economic development component that will continue to serve the community and draw visitors to the area.



Illustration 8-3
HOSPITALITY DISTRICT



Illustration 8-4
HOSPITALITY DISTRICT

² Objectives are excerpts from the MRO and aerospace Partnership's website: www.aeroeoc.com

Street and Sidewalk Improvement: Quality of Life

The City is currently undergoing a variety of infrastructure improvements. Major streets such as Douglas Boulevard, SE 29th Street, and Air Depot Boulevard have been improved (e.g., repaving and widening). Also, the City is in the process of retrofitting many streets with sidewalks, such as Reno Avenue. This effort has been highly visible and has added to the overall quality of life for the City's residents and commuters.

Tinker Business and Industrial Park³

Tinker Business and Industrial Park (TBIP) is a 62-acre Planned Unit Development, specifically designed to enhance the mission of Tinker Air Force Base. Today, TBIP consists of three buildings totaling over 170,000 square feet. Twenty-eight companies and approximately 1,000 employees, (500 on-site) account for over \$1 billion of the contract value amounts awarded by Tinker AFB annually. Upon completion, TBIP will feature 12 to 15 buildings, employment opportunities for approximately 4,000 employees and contain a total of 1,000,000 square feet.

NE 23rd Street Technology and Industrial Park

The NE 23rd Street Technology and Industrial Park is a 165-acre site located near the intersection of Air Depot Road and NE 23rd Street. The site's southern boundaries are adjacent to the Chicago Rock Island & Pacific Railroad. This provides opportunities for increased employment and economic development.

Heritage Park Mall

Heritage Park Mall has served the community for several decades. The mall is now showing signs of aging and has currently lost many of its tenants. However, the mall's future has many possibilities. The site could be the location for a major redevelopment effort that would include a variety of new land uses and buildings. Alternatively, the mall could undergo renovations and updating and could serve the area for years to come.

³ Midwest City Chamber of Commerce, Economic Outlook – Fiscal Year 2005, pg. 9 (Note: entire section is excerpt)

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Economic Development Strategies and Recommendations

Improving the Quality of Life

Improving the quality of life is a concept that is sought by all economic development efforts. As discussed earlier in this chapter, economic development generally can be summarized as an effort to create and retain jobs in a given area (such as a city, county, or state) in order to improve the quality of life. It is recommended that the City seek to improve the quality of life for all residents by recruiting businesses with well-paying jobs.

Supporting the Existing Economic Development Strategies

Midwest City and Midwest City Chamber of Commerce have currently undertaken numerous projects related to economic development. It is recommended that the City and Chamber continue to pursue their economic development goals and programs such as, but not limited to, the “East Is In!” campaign, 29th Street/Downtown Redevelopment Project, Hospitality District, MRO and Aerospace Partnership, special incentive and business assistance zones, and street and sidewalk improvements. Additionally, the City and Chamber should continue to foster collaborative economic development relationships with cities, businesses, and other appropriate entities.

Thoroughfares

Thoroughfares are a critical link to economic development because they provide mobility and access. Thereby, a community’s thoroughfare system provides the means for economic development to occur. With an efficient and well-maintained transportation infrastructure, people can enter, leave, and navigate the City for business and leisure.

The greatest amount of traffic in the City is along Interstate 40. Consequently, the mobility and access of this highway are important to the City and its

economic development efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that the mobility, access, and any corresponding safety issues related to Interstate 40 be improved. Specifically, improvements regarding the safety and visibility along on- and off-ramps should be considered.

Future Land Use Plan

Similar to the way in which a map serves as a guide to a particular destination, the *Future Land Use Plan* should serve Midwest City as a guide to its particular, unique vision for the future, as expressed in the *Goals & Objectives* chapter. Economic development and the *Future Land Use Plan* are deeply intertwined. The *Future Land Use Plan* establishes the types and locations of different land uses; therefore, it is one of the elements most influential on a City's quality of life.

In order to promote economic development, sites along NE 23rd Street are classified as industrial uses. The classification would allow a new business park to be located within the City and could create positive development in the City's northern section. The fact that special incentive districts also cover this area, adjacent to NE 23rd Street, enhances it as a business/industrial park site.

Image and Design

The way in which Midwest City is viewed from major roadways can affect perceptions of quality of life. This view from the road, formed mainly by the businesses along the road, is extremely important. It often provides people with their first and lasting impression of Midwest City.

Currently, many existing non-residential buildings along major roadways do not enhance but reduce the visual appeal of the community. In order to improve the image of Midwest City from the roadway, it is recommended that incentives be provided to businesses to improve building facades. A matching grant program, with funds from either the City or Chamber of Commerce (or a combination of the two) could be established in order to improve the City's image.

As mentioned previously, the greatest amount of traffic in the City travels along Interstate 40. This highway serves as a main gateway into the City and people often establish their impression of the City from the view of this roadway. Consequently, the visual appeal of Interstate Highway 40 is important to the

City and its economic development efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that visual improvements be reviewed and implemented (e.g., sandblasting concrete) to increase the visual appeal of Interstate Highway 40.

Housing and Neighborhoods

Housing is a key component to local economic development efforts and can be used to promote the City. For example, employers desire to locate in communities with a high quality housing stock. For employers, a community with a variety of quality homes serves as an additional incentive or bonus that they can offer their employees. This is attractive to employers because they want to attract the best employees and remain competitive with other employers' benefits.

It is one of the goals of this Comprehensive Plan to increase the quality of the City's housing stock. Currently, the City has an abundance of smaller lot homes, with a relatively few larger lot homes. The majority of the larger lot homes are mostly located in the eastern half of the City. In order to provide a quality and more balanced housing stock, with a mixture of home and lot sizes, this imbalance towards having a greater amount of smaller lot homes should be addressed. Therefore, it is recommended that the City coordinate its housing efforts to provide a quality housing stock that provides a full-range of housing opportunities.

Parks and Trails

Parks and trails are important contributors to the residents' quality of life. (Chapter 7 addressed the City's parks and trails system in detail.) Therefore, in order to improve the residents' quality of life (and thus promote economic development), it is recommended that the City coordinate the park program to the needs of existing and future residents by providing a high quality of existing and new park facilities.

The City's park system can also be explicitly used as an economic development tool. Specifically, the City should attempt to recruit and host different sports tournaments. The City has several advantages to serving as a host city for tournaments such as location, hotel space, and facilities. The hospitality district is well suited to provide lodging for tournament visitors. Also, restaurants and other local retail establishments would potentially benefit from an influx of visitors to the community. Additionally, tournaments held at Rose State College would also benefit the City. Therefore, if any tournaments are held at Rose State, then the City should be supportive of such efforts.

Business Survey

It is important for the people who influence the City's economic development policy to have an understanding of the existing conditions and the specific issues that are facing Midwest City's businesses. This understanding will assist in the development of future policies to be tailored specifically for Midwest City's business environment. However, with the business environment always changing and evolving, it can be difficult for policy makers to have an understanding of the current issues facing Midwest City's businesses. Therefore, it is recommended that the City conduct a survey of existing businesses to discover the needs and issues currently affecting them. The results of this survey should be used to develop policies to improve the economic environment and quality of life within the City.

Business Site Relocation Consultants

Larger businesses that are looking to relocate their companies to new locations usually do not perform their own site relocation searches. Instead, businesses often hire specialized site relocation consulting firms to research multiple sites and to narrow choices to a few communities with the best sites. These consulting firms have detailed knowledge about communities (such as demographics, taxes, economic conditions, and infrastructure) and use this knowledge to match the needs of the business that is relocating. It is recommended that the City, in coordination with the Chamber of Commerce, should embark on an intensive search to seek out site relocation consultants and ensure that the City and the surrounding region are high on the list of possible relocation sites for "targeted businesses." "Targeted businesses" are businesses that the City and Chamber of Commerce have selected to recruit or retain within the City.

Non-Tinker AFB Industries

Midwest City has been and will continue to be a lead community in services provided to Tinker Air Force Base (AFB). Midwest City has proved to be a valuable service community by providing many businesses that service the base. Currently, the military has no plans to decrease any operations at Tinker AFB and businesses that provide service to Tinker are successful. However, the City's focus on Tinker-related industries should not preclude the recruitment of non-

Tinker industries. Non-Tinker industries would help to diversify the City's economy and could provide for a dynamic industry environment. Therefore, it is recommended that the City promote an industry not associated with traditional Tinker AFB industries that Midwest City can be known for throughout the region, State, and country.

Distinguish Midwest City

Midwest City already has a unique place within the Oklahoma City region. Its history and relationship to Tinker AFB immediately distinguish it from other communities. If a closer review of the City is undertaken, then more distinguishing features of this unique City can be seen, such as its high quality parks, Rose State College, the Downtown Redevelopment area, and the Hospitality District. It is recommended that the City promote its distinguishing qualities. One method could be to establish a list of the top ten distinguishing characteristics of the City and then to promote those characteristics in economic development efforts.

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Conclusion

Economic development is a long-term process. It is not uncommon for the implementation of these strategies and programs to extend over a five-year period or longer. Therefore, City leaders and civic groups involved in economic development must be prepared to stay the course during the completion and implementation of these long-term plans. To achieve the goal of an increasingly strengthened and stabilized economy, the City should continue to work diligently with local and regional groups on efforts to improve the local and regional economy. The recommendations that have been discussed throughout this chapter are summarized in **Table 8-3**.

<p><i>Table 8-3</i> <i>Economic Development Strategies</i> <i>Midwest City, Oklahoma</i></p>
Support of Existing Economic Development Strategies
Improve the quality of life for all residents by recruiting businesses with well-paying jobs.
Continue to develop media relations to promote Midwest City.
Continue to support the “East is In!” campaign and other marketing campaigns by the Chamber of Commerce.
Support the efforts of and continue to build upon the Eastern Oklahoma County Aircraft Maintenance, Repair, Overhaul (MRO) & Aerospace Partnership to improve the business environment around Tinker AFB.
Continue collaborative economic development relationships.
Economic Development Strategies
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Thoroughfares</u></p> <p>Mobility, access and any corresponding safety related issues related to Interstate Highway 40 should be improved. Specifically, improvements regarding the safety and visibility along the on and off-ramp should be considered.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Future Land Use</u></p> <p>Support the development of a business/industrial park along NE 23rd Street.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Image and Design</u></p> <p>Provide incentives to businesses to improve building facades, such as a matching grant program, with funds from either the City or Chamber of Commerce (or combination of the two).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Image and Design</u></p> <p>Enhance existing thoroughfares by improving their visual appearance/appeal and design.</p>

<p>Table 8-3 (Continued) Economic Development Strategies Midwest City, Oklahoma</p>
<p>Economic Development Strategies</p>
<p><u>Image and Design</u> It is recommended that visual improvements be reviewed and implemented (e.g., sandblasting concrete) to increase the visual appeal of Interstate Highway 40.</p>
<p><u>Housing and Neighborhoods</u> Coordinate the City’s housing efforts to provide a full-range of housing opportunities.</p>
<p><u>Parks and Trails</u> In order to improve the quality of life, coordinate the park program to the needs of residents (both existing and future) by providing high quality existing and new facilities.</p>
<p><u>Parks and Trails</u> Promote the use of the City’s park system, such as hosting tournaments.</p>
<p><u>Business Survey</u> Develop a business survey to solicit input from the business community.</p>
<p><u>Business Site Relocation Consultants</u> Seek out and establish a connection with consultants who work to find location sites for new or relocating businesses, and ensure that Midwest City and the surrounding region are high on the list of possible sites for target businesses.</p>
<p><u>Non-Tinker AFB Industries</u> Promote an industry, not associated with traditional Tinker AFB, that Midwest City can be known for throughout the region, state, and country.</p>
<p><u>Distinguish Midwest City</u> Distinguish Midwest City and its qualities from the surrounding Oklahoma City region. (Possible method: top ten list)</p>
<p><i>Note: Not in any order of priority.</i> Source: City of Midwest City’s Economic Development Strategies.</p>