

*Chapter 9:
Implementation Strategies*



*MIDWEST CITY, OKLAHOMA
Comprehensive Plan 2008*

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Introduction

General

The importance of city planning can never be overstated. The future of Midwest City will be shaped with the policies and recommendations developed in this Comprehensive Plan 2008. Based on this plan, decisions will be made that will influence many aspects of the City's built and social environments. Midwest City has taken an important leadership role in defining its future with the adoption of this Plan. This Plan will provide a very important tool for City staff and civic leaders to use in making sound planning decisions regarding the long-term growth and development of Midwest City. The future quality of life in Midwest City will be substantially influenced by the manner in which Comprehensive Plan recommendations are administered and maintained.

Changes in Midwest City's socioeconomic climate and in development trends that were not anticipated during preparation of this Plan will occur from time to time and, therefore, subsequent adjustments will be required. Elements of the City that were addressed in terms of a general relationship to the overall area may, in the future, require more specific and detailed attention. Planning for the City's future should be a continuous process, and this Comprehensive Plan is designed to be a dynamic tool that can be modified and periodically updated to keep it in tune with changing conditions and trends.

Comprehensive plan policies and recommendations may be put into effect through adopted development regulations, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances, and through capital improvement programs. Many recommendations within this Plan can be implemented through simple refinement of existing regulations or City processes, while others may require the establishment of new regulations, programs, or processes. This final chapter of this Comprehensive Plan 2008 describes specific ways in which Midwest City can take the recommendations within this Plan from vision to reality.

Proactive & Reactive Implementation

There are two primary methods of Plan implementation - proactive and reactive methods. To successfully implement the Comprehensive Plan 2008 and fully

realize its benefits, both methods must be used in an effective manner. Both proactive and reactive actions that could be used by Midwest City are described within this chapter.

Examples of proactive methods include:

- Developing a capital improvements program (CIP) by which the City expends funds to finance certain public improvements (e.g., utility lines, roadways, etc.) to meet objectives that are cited within this Plan;
- Establishing/enforcing zoning regulations;
- Establishing/enforcing subdivision regulations.

Examples of reactive methods include:

- Rezoning a development proposal that would enhance the City and is based on the Comprehensive Plan;
- Site plan review;
- Subdivision review.



The Roles of the Comprehensive Plan

A Guide for Daily Decision-Making

The current physical layout of the City is a product of previous efforts put forth by many diverse individuals and groups. In the future, each new development that takes place, whether a subdivision that is platted, a home that is built, or a new school, church or shopping center that is constructed, represents an addition to Midwest City's physical form. The composite of all such efforts and facilities creates the City as it is seen and experienced by its citizens and visitors. If planning is to be effective, it must guide each and every individual development decision. The City, in its daily decisions pertaining to whether to resurface a street, to approve a residential plat, to amend a zoning ordinance provision, to enforce the building codes, or to construct a new utility line, should always refer to the basic principles outlined within the Comprehensive Plan. The private builder or investor, likewise, should recognize the broad concepts and policies of this Plan so that their efforts become part of a meaningful whole in planning the City.

A Flexible & Alterable Guide

The Comprehensive Plan 2008 is intended to be a dynamic planning document for Midwest City – one that responds to changing needs and conditions. Plan amendments should not be made without thorough analysis of immediate needs, as well as consideration of the long-term affects of proposed amendments. The City Council and other Midwest City officials should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether it is consistent with this Plan's goals and policies, and whether it will be beneficial for the long-term health and vitality of Midwest City.

At one- to three-year intervals, a periodic review of the Comprehensive Plan with respect to current conditions and trends should be performed. Such on-going, scheduled reevaluations will provide a basis for adjusting capital expenditures and priorities, and will reveal changes and additions that should be made to this Plan in order to keep it current and applicable. It would be appropriate to devote one annual meeting of the Planning Commission to reviewing the status and continued applicability of this Plan in light of current conditions, and to

prepare a report on these findings to the City Council. Those items that appear to need specific attention should be examined in more detail, and changes and/or additions should be made accordingly. By such periodic reevaluations, this Plan will remain functional and will continue to give civic leaders effective guidance in decision-making. Periodic reviews of this Plan should include consideration of the following:

- The City's progress in implementing this Plan;
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of this Plan;
- Community support for this Plan's goals, objectives & policies; and
- Changes in state law.

The full benefits of this Plan for Midwest City can only be realized by maintaining it as a dynamic, up-to-date document. As changes occur and new issues within the City become apparent, this Plan should be revised rather than ignored. By such action, this Plan will remain current and effective in meeting the City's decision-making needs.

Complete Review with Public Participation

In addition to periodic annual reviews, this Comprehensive Plan 2008 should undergo a complete, more thorough review and update every five years. The review and updating process should begin with the establishment of a steering committee appointed to assist in the review of this Plan. This committee or the Planning Commission should be in charge of periodic review of this Plan. Specific input on major changes should be sought from various groups, including property owners, neighborhood groups, civic leaders and major stakeholders, developers, merchants, City Staff, and citizens and individuals who express an interest in the long-term growth and development of the City.

Regulatory Mechanisms

General

The usual processes for reviewing and processing zoning amendments, development plans, and subdivision plans provide significant opportunities for implementing this Comprehensive Plan 2008. Each zoning, development and subdivision decision should be evaluated and weighed against applicable principles contained within this Plan. If decisions are made that are inconsistent with Plan recommendations, then they should include actions to modify or amend this Plan accordingly in order to ensure consistency and fairness in future decision-making. Amending the Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Ordinance represent two major proactive measures that the City can take to implement Comprehensive Plan 2008 recommendations.

The Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is perhaps the single most powerful tool for implementing Plan recommendations. The City's Zoning Ordinance should be updated with the recommendations contained within the various chapters of this Comprehensive Plan. All zoning and land use changes should be made within the context of existing land uses, future land uses and planned infrastructure, including roadways, water, and wastewater. The following are general recommendations related to zoning regulations and processes. Other specific priority recommendations that can be implemented through zoning are contained within the Specific Implementation Recommendation section of this chapter (page 9-13).

Zoning Text Amendments

Design & Development Standards

There are numerous recommendations within this Comprehensive Plan 2008 that relate to enhancing design standards. Their implementation will not only improve future development and interaction between land uses but will also improve Midwest City's overall image and livability. Such recommendations involve buffering, landscaping, non-residential building design and compatibility to name a few. These recommendations should be

itemized and prioritized, and should be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance accordingly.

Other Standards

The following list of changes should be made to the City's existing Zoning Ordinance text.

- **Add New Definitions** - Add new definitions to conform to state and federal statutes (i.e., churches, telecommunications antennae, etc.).
- **Incorporate the following Residential Zoning Districts** - Revise the Zoning Ordinance to incorporate the following zoning districts:
 - **A-1: General Agriculture**
 - Minimum lot size: 87,120
 - Minimum house size: None
 - **R-35: Single-Family Detached**
 - Minimum lot size: 35,000
 - Minimum house size: 2,400
 - **R-22: Single-Family Detached**
 - Minimum lot size: 22,000
 - Minimum house size: 2,100
 - **R-10: Single-Family Detached**
 - Minimum lot size: 10,000
 - Minimum house size: 1,800
 - **R-8: Single-Family Detached**
 - Minimum lot size: 8,000
 - Minimum house size: 1,500
 - **R-6: Single-Family Detached**
 - Minimum lot size: 6,000.
 - Minimum house size: 1,200
- **Add/Amend Standards** - Add standards consistent with the Comprehensive Plan for the following:
 - Landscaping;
 - Screening;
 - Setbacks;
 - Driveways;
 - Building materials;
 - Shared driveways and cross access; and
 - Screening/buffering for single-family development.

Zoning Map Amendments

State law gives power to cities to regulate the use of land, but regulations should be based on a plan. Therefore, Midwest City's Zoning Map should be as consistent as possible with this Comprehensive Plan, specifically the *Future Land Use Plan Map*. It is not reasonable, however, to recommend that the City make

large-scale changes in its zoning map changes immediately. It is therefore recommended that the City prioritize areas where a change in current zoning is needed in the short-term and that efforts be concentrated on making such changes. In the long-term, consistent zoning policy in conformance with the *Future Land Use Plan Map* will achieve the City's preferred land use pattern over time.

Zoning & the Future Land Use Plan

A zoning map should reflect the *Future Land Use Plan* to the fullest extent possible.

Reactive Use of Zoning & this Plan

Approval of development proposals that are inconsistent with the *Future Land Use Plan* will often result in inconsistency between the *Future Land Use Plan* and zoning regulations. It is recommended that Midwest City amend the *Future Land Use Plan* prior to or simultaneously with rezoning land that would result in such inconsistency.

In order to expedite the process of amending the *Future Land Use Plan* to ensure zoning regulations correspond, the related amendment recommendation(s) should be forwarded simultaneously with the rezoning request(s). It is recommended that Midwest City engage in regular review of the *Future Land Use Plan* to ensure that zoning is consistent, and that the document and the map reflect all amendments made subsequent to this Plan's initial adoption. It should be noted that specific implementation measures related to zoning are addressed within the this chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Subdivision Ordinance

The act of subdividing land to create building sites has a major effect on the overall design and image of Midwest City. Much of the basic physical form of the City is currently created by the layout of streets, easements, and lots. In the future, the basic physical form of Midwest City will be further affected by such action. Requirements for adequate public facilities are essential to ensure the City's orderly and efficient growth. Specific priority recommendations that can be implemented through subdivision oversight are contained within the Specific Implementation Recommendation section of this chapter (page 9-13).

Roadway Section Standards

The adequate provision of transportation and access to, and possibly through, a tract of land is an important health, safety, and welfare consideration. In order

to ensure that roadways will have available capacity to support population growth and related increases in traffic, the City requires specific rights-of-way and paving standards within the Subdivision Ordinance. Most of Midwest City's sections are adequate. This should continue but roadway section requirements should be amended to conform to the section recommendations (e.g., rural sections) within the *Thoroughfare Plan* of this Comprehensive Plan.



Capital Improvements Programming

General

Capital improvements are integrally linked to the City's Comprehensive Plan and its regulatory ordinances. A capital improvement such as a water treatment plant illustrates this concept in the following example:

The Comprehensive Plan recommends areas for a particular type of development, the Zoning Ordinance reinforces Plan recommendations with applicable zoning districts consistent with that type of development, and the Subdivision Ordinance regulates the facilities (e.g., utility extensions, roadway widths, etc.) necessary to accommodate that type of development. The type of development that is recommended by the Comprehensive Plan and that is regulated and approved in accordance with the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance dictates the water treatment plant's size and capacity.

It is in the City's long-term financial interest to invest regularly in the physical maintenance and enhancement of Midwest City rather than to undertake large improvement-type programs at longer time intervals. A modest amount of money expended annually on prioritized items in accordance with Plan recommendations will produce a far greater return to the City than will large expenditures at long intervals. A discussion of various possible funding mechanisms follows.

Funding Mechanisms

Ad Valorem Taxes

The following list contains possible actions that the City can take to increase its revenue stream so that it is able to reduce taxes.

- Concentrate on Improving Housing – Midwest City's housing challenges have been discussed in detail within this Comprehensive Plan. When housing units are improved, their valuations will increase thereby increasing their value. This increase in taxable value would eventually help the City to lower taxes.

- Protect Prime Retail Property – Prime retail property should not be developed for a purpose other than retail. Retail sales tax revenue (supplementing ad valorem taxes) is a major contributor to the City’s overall budget. Also, the City’s location along Interstate Highway 40/SE 29th Street provides prime locations for a variety of retail uses. This land should be preserved for retail use through zoning regulations; other less attractive sites should be encouraged to redevelop as office or residential uses.
- Attract Tax-Generating Businesses – Attracting new business will be key to the City’s ability to lower its tax rate.

It is extremely important for the City to have a budget that is balanced by revenue from residential and non-residential uses. Quality non-residential development helps offset the cost of public services generally demanded by residential uses. The previously listed actions will help Midwest City create a necessary balance. Increasing revenue from other sources will eventually allow the City to lower the tax burden of its residents.

Impact Fees

Impact fees can be described as fees charged to new development based on that development’s proportionate impact on the infrastructure system. The primary advantage to having this funding source is that it provides cities with the increased ability to plan and construct capital facilities so that the needed infrastructure system capacity is available when the market warrants. If they are not implemented, new capital facilities will likely be financed through sales taxes, utility rates, and possibly a future ad valorem tax, which are paid by existing as well as future residents. With impact fees, the development community is responsible for paying its related share of the cost of growth and the impact of that growth on local infrastructure systems.

However, while impact fees provide financing help for cities, they also increase the cost of development. As most costs associated with development are “passed through” to the consumer, it can be argued that impact fees increase the cost of housing or deter economic development. Additional arguments have been made that impact fees promote development outside the city limits and shift growth away from cities that have adopted impact fees.

It is recommended that Midwest City evaluate the concept of impact fees to provide for new infrastructure needs, such as water, wastewater, stormwater, streets, etc. It should be noted that other cities in the area have adopted impact fees, including Norman and Edmond. However, the State of Oklahoma has not yet adopted enabling legislation for impacts fees and cities currently derive their authority to implement impact fees from their standard police power.

State & County Funding

Coordination with state agencies and with Oklahoma County is recommended for the joint planning and cost sharing of projects. A widely utilized example of state funding is the use of funds allocated by Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). ODOT receives funds from the federal government and directly from the state budget that it distributes for roadway construction and maintenance across Oklahoma. The City should investigate which roads within Midwest City could be eligible for such funds.

The City should work with Oklahoma County to secure increased County participation in projects that impact not only Midwest City, but the County as a whole. Citizens within Midwest City are also citizens of Oklahoma County, and they could benefit from such participation through improved park areas and roadways.

Various Types of Bonds

The two most widely used types of bonds are general obligation bonds and revenue bonds. General obligation bonds, commonly referred to as G.O.s, can be described as bonds that are secured by a pledge of the credit and taxing power of the City and must be approved by a vote of the City's residents. Revenue bonds can be described as bonds that are secured by the revenue of the City. Revenue bonds can be voted on by the City Council without a City-wide election. It should be noted that if Midwest City chooses to adopt an impact fee ordinance and bonds have been included in the assessment of impact fees, funds derived from impact fees might be able to be used to retire bonds.

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Specific Implementation Recommendations

Implementation is probably one of the most important, yet most difficult, aspects of the comprehensive planning process. Without viable, realistic mechanisms for implementation, the recommendations contained within the Comprehensive Plan will be difficult to realize. The following general recommendations have been prioritized into level one (most important), level two and level three recommendations.

Priority 1: Recommendations

New Residential Zoning Districts (Ch.6)
Varied Housing (Ch.6)
Redevelopment of Retail Lots (Ch.4)
Tree Preservation (Ch.4, Ch7)
Quality Housing (Ch.6)
Trails (Ch.7.)
Gateway/Entryway (Ch.5)
Sidewalks (Ch.5, Ch.6)
Distinguish Midwest City (Ch.8)
Increase Regional Park Acreage (Ch.7)
Regional Park Feasibility Study (Ch.7)
New Roadway Sections, with Raised Medians (Ch.3)
Improve Safety along Interstate Highway 40 (Ch.3, Ch.8)
Discourage Most Residential Uses from Facing Arterial Roadways (Ch.4)
Continue to Support Current Economic Development Efforts (Ch.8)

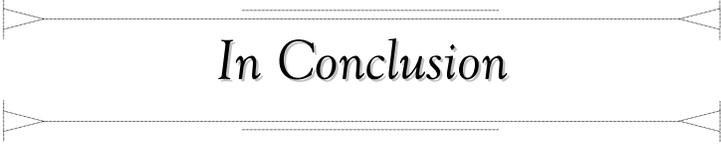
Priority 2: Recommendations

Maintain Existing Cross-sections, with Added Utility Easements (Ch.3)
Preserve the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Rail Line for Use in a Regional Rail Transportation System (Ch.3)
Access Management Criteria (Ch.3)
Mixed Use Developments (Ch.4)
Work with Owners of Rental Properties (Ch.6)
Residential Screening (Ch.5)
Subdivision Fencing and Entryways (Ch.5)
Enhanced Setbacks (Ch.5)
Refuse Containers (Ch.5)
Façade Materials (Ch.5)

- Driveway Configuration (Ch.6)
- Retaining Walls (Ch.6)
- New Neighborhood Parks (Ch.7)

Priority 3: Recommendations

- Limit the Number of Intersections and Driveways Along Arterial Roadways (Ch.3)
- Ensure Local Roadways Operate at a Level of Service “C.” (Ch.3)
- Grade Separate Railroad Crossing (Ch.3)
- Promote Use of Industrial Economic Incentive Districts (Ch.4)
- Landscaping (Ch.5)
- Monument Signs (Ch.5)
- Updating Park Dedication Requirements (Ch.7)
- Contact Business Site Relocation Consultants (Ch.8)
- Allocating Funds for Demolition (Ch.6)
- Promote Non-Tinker AFB Industries (Ch.8)
- Review Current Code Enforcement Policies (Ch.6)



In Conclusion

This Implementation Plan is the culmination of recommendations and policies discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan 2008. As Midwest City continues in its quality planning efforts, the priorities outlined within this Plan should be considered. Especially important to the City's short-term future is the recommendations identified as level one priority.

The various elements of this Plan are based upon realistic goals, objectives, and recommendations for the City that resulted from an intense comprehensive planning process involving a Steering Committee, citizens, Midwest City staff, and elected and appointed officials. The Comprehensive Plan, once adopted, becomes the official policy of the City. To be fully effective, this Plan should be used on a daily basis to determine policy, thereby guiding Midwest City to realize its ultimate vision.