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In February of 2016, the City of Ardmore kicked-off an 18-month process of updating its Comprehensive Plan to establish a long-term vision for Ardmore. The planning process included fieldwork, data collection, market analysis, extensive public outreach, and consensus building. This document represents the culmination of those efforts and serves as the City’s official vision for the future and primary policy guide for growth and development.

PURPOSE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Ardmore Comprehensive Plan is a detailed policy document that guides land use, development, capital improvements, community investment, growth, for 15 to 20 years to ensure and maintain a high quality of life. The Plan is comprehensive both in breadth and scope, with recommendations for areas that encompass land use, housing, parks and recreation, transportation, and community facilities, and more. The Comprehensive Plan provides a vision for the future, based on community input and consensus, and provides the framework for regulatory tools like zoning, subdivision regulations, annexations, and other policies.

Authorized by Title 11 of Oklahoma State Statutes, Ardmore’s Comprehensive Plan promotes the community’s vision, goals, objectives, and policies; establishes a process for orderly growth and development; addresses both current and long-term needs; and provides for a balance between the natural and built environment.

USING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is designed to serve as a foundation for decision-making for the City, developers, residents, and other stakeholders. The Ardmore Comprehensive Plan should be used for the following:

A basis for regulatory actions: The plan serves as a foundation and guide for the provisions of the zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, the official map, flood hazard regulations, annexation decisions and other decisions made under these regulations.

A basis for community programs and decision-making: The plan is a guide and resource for the recommendations contained in a capital budget and program, for a community development program, and for discretion and content of other local initiatives, such as for water protection, recreation or open space land acquisition and housing.

A source for planning studies: Few plans can address every issue in sufficient detail. Therefore, building upon the comprehensive plan, further studies and plans may be needed to develop courses of action on a specific need.

A standard for review at the local, County, and State level: The comprehensive plan is the standard for review for development proposals and applications for state and federal funding and support. Comprehensive plans should be used to develop regional plans or inter-municipal programs, i.e., a regional trail networks, transit programs, and economic development initiatives.

A source of information and marketing: The plan is a valuable source of information for local boards, commissions, organizations, citizens, and business. The plan is also a powerful marketing tool that can be used to promote a community and highlight opportunities for investment.

A long-term guide: The plan is a long-term guide by which to measure and evaluate public and private proposals that affect the physical, social and economic environment of the community.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC) comprised of Ardmore’s community leaders and residents was formed to work with the City and its consultants to serve as a sounding board for the community and provide guidance on important issues and policies that may influence the development of the Comprehensive Plan. To ensure that all products of the planning process reflect the community’s interest, the CPAC attended meetings and reviewed and vetoed drafts and materials prior to public dissemination. The CPAC contains 11 members from a variety of backgrounds, including business owners, citizens, non-profit leadership, and city officials from various commissions and boards.
THE PLANNING PROCESS

The City of Ardmore’s comprehensive planning process incorporated eight key tasks completed over the last year. The process was designed to produce a plan for the community by assessing existing conditions and influences, establishing a vision, and developing policies and recommendations to serve as a guide for community decision-making. The planning process was built on a foundation of community input and outreach, and focused on both community-wide and subarea-specific recommendations. The planning process included the following tasks:

- **Task 1: Project Initiation.** In February of 2016, the planning process kicked off with meetings with key City officials, a tour of the city, and an initiation workshop with the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (CPAC).

- **Task 2: Community Outreach.** Residents and other stakeholders were engaged early in the process through a diverse variety of outreach methods, including public workshops, interviews and focus groups, and an interactive project website which featured a map—an online community issues mapping tool.

- **Task 3: Existing Conditions Analysis.** Near the project’s halfway point, an Existing Conditions Report was prepared and presented to the CPAC and the community. The Existing Conditions Report presented a summary and analysis of (a) existing physical conditions in the community obtained through field observation; (b) results of the community outreach exercises; (c) market and demographic trends and implications; and (d) an analysis of previously prepared plans, studies, and other policy initiatives. The Existing Conditions Report is in file with the City.

- **Task 4: Community Vision, Goals & Objectives.** A hands-on community visioning workshop tasked Ardmore residents to articulate and illustrate their vision for the future of Ardmore. The results of the workshop along with the analysis of existing conditions provided direction for Ardmore’s long-range vision and the goals, objectives, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Task 5: Housing Study.** Building off of the Demographic & Market Analysis within Task 3, a long-range (2030) housing study was conducted, including build-out projections, supply/demand issues, and housing needs.

- **Task 6: Community-Wide Plans & Policies.** Building on all the preceding steps and reflecting community input, this task entailed preparing detailed plans, recommendations, and policies for plans for land use, transportation and mobility, open space and environmental features, and community facilities. These components provide the “core” for the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Task 7: Sub-Area Plans.** Detailed subarea plans were prepared for three important areas within Ardmore: Downtown, 12th Avenue, and Rockford Road. These plans include recommendations on land use and development, multi-modal access and mobility, and urban design principles.

- **Task 8: Plan Documents & Adoption.** The final task in the planning process compiles the work products into a draft Comprehensive Plan document for local review and consideration. Based on feedback from the CPAC, the draft plan was amended and presented to Planning Commissioner for public hearing and then to the City Commission for adoption.

ORGANIZATION OF PLAN

The Comprehensive Plan is organized into 11 chapters:

- **Chapter 1 – Introduction.** Introducing the purpose and use of the Comprehensive Plan, a review of the planning process, and the organization of the document;

- **Chapter 2 – Community Profile,** detailing a variety of important background information, such as the City’s history, development controls, existing land uses, demographics, as well as a summary of all community outreach conducted;

- **Chapter 3 – A Vision for Ardmore,** establishing the community vision that guides the Comprehensive Plan document and paints a picture of what Ardmore should look like in 2030;

- **Chapter 4 – Goals & Objectives,** describes the goals and objectives pertaining to land use and development, housing and neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas, transportation network, community facilities and infrastructure, parks, open space and environmental features;

- **Chapter 5 – Land Use & Development,** illustrating and describing in general terms the type and location of the unique places and future land uses within Ardmore (this section also addresses growth management and land use);

- **Chapter 6 – Housing & Neighborhoods,** detailing policies and recommendations for the City’s neighborhoods, including land use, infill development, code enforcement, historic preservation, urban growth areas, and more;

- **Chapter 7 – Commercial & Employment Areas,** detailing opportunities for redevelopment and growth, establishing recommendations regarding land use and urban design for the City’s commercial and industrial areas, including specific subarea plans for the Downtown Ardmore, 12th Avenue, and Rockford Road;

- **Chapter 8 – Transportation & Mobility,** providing recommendations for the City’s roads, trails, sidewalks, and more; and identifying opportunities to increase community connectivity;
The City of Ardmore is in south central Oklahoma near the Texas-Oklahoma border, within a multi-county region called “Texoma.” The region is relatively rural, and historically has relied on the oil, gas, ranching, and manufacturing industries. Ardmore is the largest established community within the Oklahoma side of this region. As such, its amenities draw in families and businesspeople from throughout the region for commercial, entertainment, and recreational activity.

As county seat of Carter County, Ardmore has access to a variety of regional transportation networks, such as airports, an Amtrak Station, BNSF freight rail, and Interstate 35 (as shown above).

As the county seat of Carter County, the City of Ardmore is a hub of county government services buildings. Most of them are located within Downtown Ardmore. One of them is the Carter County Courthouse that is shown above.
Ardmore is located on land that was a component of the Louisiana Purchase from France in 1807. The Ardmore area remained unsettled until Chickasaw Indians, forcibly removed from the southeastern United States under the Indian Removal Act of 1830, were relocated to Oklahoma.

The community of Ardmore began as a rail stop along the Santa Fe Railroad. A local railway agent named the rail stop Ardmore, after his hometown of Ardmore, Pennsylvania which had been named after Ardmore-By-the-Sea, Ireland. Its rail status and designation as a U.S. Court town attracted travelers and businesspeople from all over. The Frisco and Rock Island railroads came to town as well several years later.

In 1898, a charter was granted to the City of Ardmore by the federal government and the first city officials were elected into office. Infrastructure such as water, sewer, paved roads, and an electric street car system were built shortly thereafter. Over the years the town grew into a hub for agricultural processing and distribution, but was destroyed by a fire in 1895, forcing the community to rebuild.

By the early 1900s Ardmore was known for its cotton, becoming known as the world’s largest inland cotton port. However, over time, depletion of Ardmore’s soil as well as changing market forces reduced local production of cotton.

Ardmore found itself luckily in the midst of one of the largest oil fields in Oklahoma, the Healdton Oil Field, as automobile usage became common. Entrepreneurs flooded the area, and Carter County quickly became the largest oil-producing county in Oklahoma. This distinction has maintained Ardmore as an energy center ever since, with the region’s natural wealth producing such energy giants as Halliburton and Noble Energy.

The Great Depression and Dust Bowl led to dire straits for Ardmore. Banks shuttered, the price of oil dropped, and refineries closed. Families left the community and more than 800 homes were vacant. One legacy project that remains from the Great Depression, however, is Lake Murray State Park, built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

In 1942, an Army Air Force Base was built in Ardmore, training B-29 crews during World War II. After the war was won by the Allies, the base was given to the city and later re-used as the Ardmore Industrial Airpark.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, Ardmore grew economically, educationally, and philanthropically. The Southern Oklahoma Area Vocational Technical Center was built in 1952, and in 1968, Ardmore was selected by Uniroyal Tire for one of its largest tire plants in the world (the plant was acquired by Michelin in 1990). A new Goddard Center for the Visual and Performing Arts and several other important community facilities were also built.

Today, Ardmore remains the activity hub of southern central Oklahoma. Development has continued towards the west, with new commercial and industrial development along the interstate. Ultimately, Ardmore is proud of its rich history as it charts its course in the 21st century.

Source: 1995 Comprehensive Plan; Ardmore Chamber of Commerce; Ardmore Main Street
The Comprehensive Planning process included a full review of past plans and studies impacting policy and planning within the City of Ardmore. This review ensures the Comprehensive Plan’s recommendations respond to prior planning efforts and, where applicable, align with previously established policies and direction. Below is the list of reviewed past plans and studies (see the Existing Conditions Report for each plan and study’s full summary):

- 1995 | Comprehensive Plan | City of Ardmore
- 1997 | Trails Master Plan | City of Ardmore
- 2011 | Historic Preservation Plan | City of Ardmore
- 2011 | Ardmore Active Living Workshop
The planning process for the Ardmore Comprehensive Plan sought input from a broad spectrum of the community including residents, business and property owners, community service providers, elected/appointed officials, and City staff. A variety of outreach efforts were used to provide multiple avenues to gather feedback regarding existing conditions and local issues, needs and aspirations. Outreach exercises were also used to promote a sense of community and foster stewardship for the plan by underscoring that participants’ voices have been heard and that their ideas have influenced the final decisions.

The following outreach efforts and initiatives were conducted:

- A Project Initiation Workshop was conducted with the 12 member Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee on the afternoon of February 10, 2016.
- Nearly 50 residents attended a Community Workshop at HFV Wilson Community Center in the evening of February 10, 2016.
- A Business Workshop was held with more than 20 business owners and operators on the morning of February 11, 2016 at the Ardmore Public Library.
- Various City staff attended a Department Heads Workshop on February 9, 2016 at City Hall.
- More than a dozen focus groups/ interviews were conducted in March and April 2016 with a variety of community stakeholders.
- A Visioning Workshop was held on July 21, 2016 at the Ardmore Convention Center, where residents worked in teams and drew their visions for the community on large maps.
- An interactive project website hosted questionnaires that were completed by 162 residents and 16 business owners.
- More than a dozen focus groups/ interviews were conducted in March and April 2016 with a variety of community stakeholders.
- A Visioning Workshop was held on July 21, 2016 at the Ardmore Convention Center, where residents worked in teams and drew their visions for the community on large maps.

The outreach process comprised of multiple outreach events and efforts, all of which highlighted the key issues and aspirations of the community. The following summarizes these priority issues and concerns. For detailed summaries of individual outreach efforts, see the Existing Conditions Report.
ECONOMY & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The need to increase the supply of trained and qualified workers in Ardmore was a common desire among workshop participants. Concern was expressed that it was difficult to expand, recruit, and retain businesses without a talented, professional workforce to draw from. Participants stressed the need to attract and retain young professionals, inject vitality into the community, and attract workers that can fill entry-level and mid-level positions. Strong emphasis was also placed on ensuring that those in low-income neighborhoods have access to quality employment opportunities.

HOUSING

The lack of quality, affordable housing for low- and middle-income families was expressed throughout the outreach process, as well as the need for increased housing maintenance and blight reduction in many neighborhoods. The high concentration of single family homes being converted to rental properties also raises concerns about their contribution to neighborhood instability. For example, concern was expressed over the neighborhoods to the east and north of Downtown, as they have fallen into disrepair and struggle to attract new investment. Greater housing diversity was also desired to accommodate the aging population and other demographic changes that the City is Facing. Additionally, most new market rate residential development is occurring at the west side of the community, largely driven by Plainview School District, which is driving neighborhood investment away from the community’s core area.

EDUCATION

The perception and quality of public education was brought up as a concern by participants, noting that the several different school districts of varying quality levels divide the community along socio-economic lines. For example, the Plainview School District is perceived to be more desirable, leading the Ardmore School District to suffer from negative perception. Because school district boundaries are an important factor for families deciding where to purchase homes, this perception has the potential to significantly impact future development. There was a common desire for better educational opportunities for the community’s youth and linking such opportunities with workforce development, contributing to a more robust workforce. Students identified the need for more quality textbooks in the Ardmore High School, more resources in the school library, better support for student organizations, and the desire for teachers to stay longer after school. Other issues brought up by the students included the food available at the school, the overcrowding of classrooms, and the allocation of funds. Overall, the students said that they would like to see education become a higher community priority.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Concern was voiced over incidences of crime and its effect on investment and the overall quality of life within the community. It is important to note that crime has declined in the City of Ardmore over the past two years, but several high-profile incidents have sparked concern over public safety. In response to these incidents, community members expressed an interest in increasing the presence of police during the weekends. In addition, concern was expressed that the community youth’s lack safe and healthy after-school and weekend activities. Without proper supervision and programming, it was noted, at-risk youth can make poor life choices with long-term consequences.

DOWNTOWN ARDMORE

Poorly maintained facades, the lack of funds for a façade grant program, and inconsistent code enforcement has negatively impacted the perception of Downtown Ardmore. Additionally, concern was expressed over panhandling and homelessness, which translates into an issue of inadequate resources for very low-income and unemployed members of the community as well as a lack of accessible, adequate mental healthcare. The need for greater business diversity, including restaurants, as well as greater residential density was expressed by members of the community. There was shared interest in promoting greater residential density through tax credits and converting old warehouses and historic buildings into mixed-use housing.

ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION

The community’s economic competitiveness and quality of life were cited to be inhibited by the City’s deteriorating roads, bridges, and utility lines. Visibility at stop signs, overall traffic in and around school campuses, and a lack of well-maintained infrastructure for non-motorized transportation were also cited as concerns. Participants commented that there are not enough bicycle lanes, some sidewalks need maintenance, and at times it is difficult to cross the road. Additionally, there was shared frustration over the lack of access to public transit as well as a regional transportation network. Participants voiced their interest in seeing improvements made to their transportation system, such as the development of new parking lots within Downtown Ardmore, increased public transit service within the community, repaired roads, cleaner streets, reduced speed limits, and improved non-motorized transportation. For example, residents identified the trails at Regional Park and along Veterans Boulevard as great assets and would like to see similar infrastructure elsewhere.

LOCAL PROGRAMS & INFRASTRUCTURE

The issue of homelessness, lack of adequate mental health resources, resources for seniors, and aging City infrastructure were common concerns among workshop participants. Participants expressed interest in pairing the usage of drug courts with treatment facilities and commented on the need for a new, quality mental health facility. Participants also expressed a need for a new senior center, increased hospital access, and an expansion of the University Center. In addition, students discussed the need for more activities and amenities within Ardmore. For example, students felt that there were few or no places for them to socialize after school and during the weekends, and that the City lacked entertainment, shopping, and food options.
DEMOGRAPHIC & MARKET ANALYSIS

An analysis of Ardmore’s demographic and market conditions was conducted to guide the planning process and provide the necessary background information for developing market-viable policy recommendations. The chapter focuses on six topics: (1) demographics, (2) employment, (3) housing, (4) retail spending, (5) commercial real estate, and (6) industrial real estate. Each section presents and assesses current trends, notes important market implications, and to the extent possible, makes projections for future growth and development opportunities. Collectively, this information provides a snapshot of Ardmore’s current competitive position within south central Oklahoma.

For context, data for Ardmore is compared, where appropriate, to the Ardmore Micropolitan Area. The micropolitan area, also referred in the text as “region,” includes both Carter and Love Counties. Data for this study were acquired from a variety of sources, including the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), the 2010 US Census, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Zillow, and ESRI Business Analyst, a nationally recognized provider of business and market data.

DEMOGRAPHICS

RESIDENTIAL POPULATION

Ardmore’s residential population is increasing. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of people living in Ardmore is projected to grow from 24,283 to 25,746—a slight increase of 1,463 people (+6.0%). This is a slightly larger increase than in the previous two censuses (1990-2000 (+2.7%); 2000-2010 (+2.4%)); but generally speaking, the community is growing at similar pacing.

The micropolitan region is increasing in population as well. Between 2010 and 2020, the region’s population is projected to grow from 47,557 to 52,775 (+11.0%). In 2015, the City of Ardmore comprised 49.8% of the region’s population.

Demographic Summary (2010, 2015, 2020)

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<th>Ardmore</th>
<th>Ardmore Micropolitan Area</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>24,283</td>
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<td>Households</td>
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<td>Average Household Size</td>
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<td>Median Age</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$37,554</td>
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DAYTIME POPULATION

Ardmore’s daytime population grows by more than 30% during weekdays. When factoring in Ardmore’s labor shed and hotel patronage (and subtracting out the commute shed), it is estimated that the city’s population increases to 32,343 people. Ardmore’s daytime population is likely even higher because that figure does not include students or shoppers.


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Ardmore Chamber of Commerce, Houseal Lavigne Associates

Residential Population: 24,866
Daytime Population: 32,343

Ardmore City Comprehensive Plan
**AGG**

Ardmore’s population is aging. Between 2010 and 2020, Ardmore’s median age is projected to rise from 37.3 years to 38.6 years. Ardmore remains slightly younger than the micropolitan region (38.1 years in 2020 and 39.7 years in 2020) and roughly the same as the national median (37.1 years in 2010 and 38.6 years in 2020).

All cohorts age 15 and over are projected to experience increases with decreases in younger cohorts ages (0-9, 10-14, and 15-19). The actual number of children under the age of 19 is projected to increase, the overall youth share of the population (<19 years) will decline slightly from 27.8% in 2010 to 27.1% in 2020.

**RACE & ETHNICITY**

Ardmore’s population is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. Between 2010 and 2020, the White share of the population is predicted to decline from 68.0% to 63.6%, with increases in minority populations.

Similarly, the city’s Hispanic population is expected to increase from 7.4% to 13.5% of the population between 2010 and 2020. For purposes of clarification, the U.S. Census considers Hispanic an ethnicity and not mutually exclusive with racial categories. For example, a resident may identify as both Black AND Hispanic.

Ardmore is also more racially diverse than the micropolitan area. In 2010, the racial minority share of the micropolitan area’s population was 25.6% compared to 32.0% in Ardmore.

**INCOME**

Incomes are rising, but city households are less affluent than micropolitan area and national households. The city’s 2015 median household income is estimated at $37,550. Between 2015 and 2020, the median income is projected to grow to $43,021 (+15%). While incomes are rising, Ardmore’s median income is roughly $3,000 lower than the regional median and $16,000 lower than the national median.

A comparison of Ardmore’s 2015 and 2020 household incomes depicts this projected increase in earnings. Income cohorts expected to gain in share are those earning greater than $75,000, with declines in households earning less. Still, while middle and higher income cohorts are increasing, a majority of households earn less than $50,000.

**IMPLICATIONS**

By 2020, the city’s population is expected to grow and become slightly older, more diverse, and experience a small increase in earnings. The changes would impact the market in different ways. The population increase suggests a market demand for business and working in Ardmore. With an addition of 314 households in Ardmore between 2015 and 2020, this can shift housing market demand by filling vacant or spurring new construction. Also, the aging of the population may prompt an increase in age-targeted development, such as multi-family housing, townhomes, and senior living options, as well as accessible health and medical services. Between 2015 and 2020, Ardmore’s youth population (<19 years old) is projected to increase by 293 people, which may impact local enrollment and youth programming. Despite this, the youth share of the population is declining, particularly in the 0-9 year-old cohort. Finally, rising incomes can cause an increase in demand for retail goods and services, helping to facilitate business growth. This also may assist the City to market itself to prospective retailers and developers, who often base sitting of new stores, restaurants, and housing units on income levels.
EMPLOYMENT

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Over the past decade, total employment in Ardmore has declined slightly. In 2014, Ardmore contained 16,169 jobs, down from 16,599 jobs in 2005 (-430 jobs / -2.6%). On the other hand, the micropolitan economy has grown over the past decade. In 2005, 80.0% of the region’s jobs were found in Ardmore. In 2014, that number has dropped to 61.8%, as other communities have added jobs while Ardmore’s employment has declined.

Total Primary Jobs (2005-2014)
Ardmore & Micropolitan Region

Local Share of Regional Employment (2005-2020)
Ardmore Micropolitan Region

Employment Density
- 0 - 9 jobs per sq. mile
- 10 - 49 jobs per sq. mile
- 50 - 199 jobs per sq. mile
- 200 - 3,386 jobs per sq. mile
- 3,387 or greater jobs per sq. mile

Source: U.S. Census On the Map; Houseal Lavigne Associates

City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
INDUSTRIES & MAJOR EMPLOYERS

Ardmore contains a healthy mixture of industries, with no one sector considered overly dominant. Ardmore’s largest industry in 2014 in terms of employment was the Healthcare and Social Assistance sector, accounting for roughly 1 in 5 jobs (3,103 jobs). Other prominent industries include Manufacturing (2,573 jobs; 15.9%), Retail Trade (2,286 jobs; 14.1%), and Accommodation and Food Services (1,626; 10.1%). Accordingly, the top five employers in Ardmore fall within these industries: Michelin North America (1,850 jobs), Mercy Memorial Health Center (1,626 jobs), Dollar General (750 jobs), Wal-Mart Super Center (570 jobs), and Ardmore City Schools (468 jobs).

EDUCATION ATTAINMENT

Ardmore’s population is better educated than the regional population, but remains less educated than the nation. It is estimated that 20.8% of Ardmore residents aged 25 years of age or older hold a bachelor’s degree or higher compared to only 17.9% in the broader micropolitan region. Nationally, 29.3% hold a bachelor’s degree or higher.

INFLOW & OUTFLOW

Ardmore is a job hub. More than 10,000 workers travel to Ardmore to work (“labor shed”) while 4,800 residents commute to work outside of the city (“commute shed”). Roughly 5,000 people both live and work in Ardmore. Ardmore’s labor shed pulls from a wide range of communities.

MARKET IMPLICATIONS

During the outreach process, some business leaders and employees expressed concern over an education and skills gap. This is reflected in lower levels of college attainment, with only 1 in 5 residents (aged 25 years +) holding a bachelor’s degree within Ardmore and 17.9% regionally. Moreover, while the micropolitan region’s economy has expanded (in terms of total employment), the City of Ardmore has not seen the same levels of employment growth. It is crucial that Ardmore positions itself to remain an attractive destination for investment in South Central Oklahoma. Additionally, Ardmore’s strategic location along I-35 between Dallas and Oklahoma City, with access to two airports, attracts heavy industry, transportation, distribution, logistics, and more. Similarly, as the home of the region’s only medical center, it is well positioned for growth in the healthcare and medical sectors. As a job hub, Ardmore’s daytime population increases as workers commute into the city, while this generates economic activity within the city, this also puts additional stress on roads, public safety and medical services, infrastructure, and more. Comprehensive planning must take this into account.
HOUSING

TOTAL UNITS
The total number of housing units is projected to increase. The City currently contains 11,227 units (2015). Between 2010 and 2020, the total number of units in the City is projected to grow by about 600 units.

TYPE
The average Ardmore home is an owner-occupied, single-family detached home. The overwhelming majority of units are single family detached (80.7%), with the remaining stock either multi-family (9.4%), single family attached (5.0%), mobile home (3.8%), and duplex (1.1%). A slight majority of homes are owner occupied (52.7%), with renter occupied (35.8%) and vacant (11.5%) comprising the rest.

TENURE
With 35.8% of the housing stock identified as renter-occupied ("tenure") but only 9.4% identified as multi-family ("type"), the city contains a fair amount of single family homes or duplexes for rent, in addition to traditional apartment units.

Compared to the micropolitan region, Ardmore’s housing stock contains a greater orientation towards rental housing. For example, only 27.2% of the region’s stock are rentals vs. 35.8% in the city.

AGE
The majority of the housing stock in Ardmore was built in the last half of the 20th century. Almost two-thirds of the housing stock was built between 1960 and 1989. Of that, 3,557 units (32.2%) were built before between 1950 and 1969. Only 1.1% of the housing stock has been built since 2010.

Housing Tenure (2015)
Ardmore

Housing Units by Age (2010-2014 Avg.)
Ardmore

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Houseal Lavigne Associates
**VALUE**

Home values are rising. The city’s 2015 median home value is estimated at $116,446. By 2020, it is projected to increase by roughly $25,000 to $142,413. In both current and projected value, the micropolitan area median home value is estimated to exceed that of Ardmore.

![Median Home Value Graph](source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates)

A comparison of the city’s housing stock composition by value in both 2015 and 2020 depicts this increase in value. Cohorts projected to increase their share of the market are mostly found in middle and upper cohorts ($100,000 - $299,999) with sizable decreases in shares of homes valued under $100,000. Most notable is the nearly 12% decrease in share of homes valued under $100,000. Most notable is the near 12% decrease in share of homes valued under $100,000. These shifts are likely the result of some combination of the following: demolition of lower-end units, upgrading of lower-end units to increase value, the new construction of higher-end units, and general increases in home values across-the-board.


**SALES**

Over the past decade, the median sales price of homes sold in Ardmore has held strong, however, the volume of sales has somewhat declined. According to Trulia, a national provider of real estate data, the home median sale in Ardmore between February–May 2016 was $150,000, compared to only $123,500 one year ago and $90,000 five years ago during the same time period. At the same time, the volume of sales being sold has declined and the market is experiencing a greater fluctuation, with sales increasingly clustered around certain months.

![Median Sales Price (2005-2016)](source: Trulia)

**NEW CONSTRUCTION**

Since the recession, new construction has been fairly robust. Since 2010, permits have been issued for 460 residential units, with an average of about 70 units per year. The volume of permits for single-family homes in some recent years has surpassed that of pre-recession levels.

Outside of a large number of multi-family units permitted in 2005, only 19 units have been permitted since 2006.

![Residential Building Permits · Total Annual Units (2005-2016)](source: U.S. Census Bureau; Houseal Lavigne Associates)

**MARKET IMPLICATIONS**

Several performance indicators (e.g., permits issued, median sales price, values) suggest the Ardmore housing market has remained stable post-recession, reflecting market confidence in Ardmore. The total number of housing units in the city is projected to grow by about 600 units between 2010 and 2020. Development of these units will have land use implications, as well as the type, tenure, and location (e.g., single vs. multi-family) of housing units. With roughly 1 in 10 housing units vacant, this can affect neighborhood stability, housing values, government services, tax revenue, and more. At present, 10% of the housing stock are multi-family units and only 19 multi-family units have been permitted since 2006. With Ardmore seeing growth in its age 60+ population it can be expected that “empty nesters” may be looking to downsize their homes, driving demand for housing that caters to a variety of needs for older age cohorts. Thus, there will likely be a need for more multi-family units, particularly in the vicinity of the downtown area, to increase vitality and activity.

![Number of Sales (2005-2016)](source: Trulia)

![Median Home Value Graph](source: ESRI Business Analyst; Houseal Lavigne Associates)
RETAIL EXISTING RETAIL AREAS
Ardmore has several retail areas that support both local and regional shopping, mostly located on the west side of town. Major commercial areas include:

DOWNTOWN ARDMORE
Downtown Ardmore is the community’s traditional “Main Street,” with one- to two-story historic structures housing local shops, restaurants, offices, and more. Given the density and historic fabric, retail spaces tend to be smaller, with parking located on-street. Downtown tends to be more of a shopping and dining destination than an everyday shopping district for convenience goods and services.

BROADWAY STREET
Broadway Street is an east-west corridor with I-35 access. Along the interstate are a cluster of auto-oriented chain restaurants (e.g. Applebee’s, Two Frogs Grill, etc.) and hotels on moderate sized lots. As one moves east along the corridor, commercial uses remain auto-oriented but are denser and mixed with local business.

HOLIDAY DRIVE
Holiday Drive is a north-south collector street that parallels I-35, connecting Broadway Street and 12th Avenue. It contains many restaurants, such as Whataburger, Starbucks, Braum’s Ice Cream, and Prairie Kitchen.

12TH AVENUE
12th Avenue is an east-west corridor with I-35 access. Most of the commercial activity is regionally-focused and clustered between the interchange in the west and Commerce Street in the east. The corridor is anchored by Lowe’s Home Improvement and the Ardmore Commons, which contains Ross Dress for Less and Dollar Tree.

COMMERCE STREET
Commerce Street is Ardmore’s main north-south roadway and also US Route 77. It has the greatest concentration of retail, with the Shops at Ardmore (home to Staples, Hobby Lobby, TJ Maxx, and more), Save-a-Lot, and a Walmart Supercenter.

COMPETITORS
Ardmore is the population center of the micropolitan region with about 50% of the region’s population. At present, Ardmore faces little retail competition from neighboring communities and, based on interviews with local business leaders, captures most interstate traffic in south central Oklahoma given location and prevalence of restaurants and hotels. For example, the two closest Walmart Supercenters are 28.3 miles away in Madill, OK and 31.3 miles in Sulphur, OK.
RETAIL GAP
A gap analysis is a comparison of supply and demand within a defined market area, which is typically a drive time. Its findings help establish what types of new retail could or could not be supported based on existing spending and sales.

Simply put, a gap analysis compares business receipts (“supply”) with what consumers spend (“demand”). When consumers spend more than businesses earn (demand > supply) in the market area, consumers are spending dollars outside of the area. This is referred to as “leakage,” and is displayed in green on the accompanying graphs. Typically, market areas with leakage are potential opportunities for growth, as local demand for these goods and services already exists but is unmet by existing supply.

Conversely, when business sales are more than consumers spend (supply > demand) in a market area, the market is saturated with customers from both within and outside the area. This is referred to as a “surplus,” and is depicted in red on the accompanying graphs. As the market is oversupplied with spending, a retail category with surplus is challenging for new retail development.

It is important to note, however, the difference between market potential (“leakage”) and the tangible development of a particular site or location. While leakage may exist, the success of recapituring that lost revenue depends on a variety of factors beyond spending habits, including the availability of developable land, construction costs, rents, road conditions, competition from nearby municipalities, and the business climate.

To help envision development potential in square footage, the following provides the average size of an assortment of retail stores, based off of data obtained by industry sources. Supported square footage from the Retail Gap Analysis can be compared to this list for context. It is important to note that these stores are listed merely for contextual purposes and not to support development of any particular brand over another.

LOCAL (10-MINUTE) & REGIONAL (30-MINUTE) DRIVETIME
The Ardmore retail market was assessed through a 10 minute and 30 minute drivetime from the intersection of Commerce Street and Broadway, roughly the geographic center of the community. As consumers shop primarily based on convenience and proximity, a drivetime best models consumer behavior as opposed to using mileage or jurisdictional boundaries. For this analysis, the 10 minute drivetime effectively depicts the “local market” of Ardmore residents and the 30 minute drivetime conveys the “regional market” of consumers throughout south central Oklahoma. Consumers will generally travel short distances for groceries and day-to-day needs, but travel longer to purchase more durable items such as refrigerators, cars, or high-end clothing.

In terms of existing supply and demand, both the local and regional market areas are fairly saturated with a few exceptions. This is not unusual for an area that sees significant interstate traffic and draws in consumers from a larger region. It is important to point out that market potential is for the entire market area and is not exclusive to Ardmore. A saturated market area does not preclude new development or uses from locating to a specific location. It does, however, mean that the City needs to ensure that it maximizes its competitive position to ensure that commercial sites have good access and exposure and that efforts are focused on retention and attraction of uses that complement one another and serve as a draw for additional development. The City’s ability to capture its proportional share of development potential is dependent on many factors and influences, such as competition, demographics, regulations, incentives, infrastructure, and more.
Retail Gap Analysis Summary
Ardmore - 10 & 30 Minute Drive Time (2015)

Summary Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10 Minute Drive Time</th>
<th>30 Minute Drive Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015 Population</td>
<td>26,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Households</td>
<td>9,195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Median Disposable Income</td>
<td>$32,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$21,815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retail Gap

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry Group</th>
<th>Retail Gap ($M)</th>
<th>Sq. Ft. Potential*</th>
<th>Retail Gap ($M)</th>
<th>Potential*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motor Vehicle &amp; Parts Dealers</td>
<td>($3.5)</td>
<td>(2,313,100)</td>
<td>($37,150)</td>
<td>($37,150)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture &amp; Home Furnishings</td>
<td>($5.3)</td>
<td>(2,957,700)</td>
<td>($34,165)</td>
<td>($34,165)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Furniture Stores</td>
<td>($4.6)</td>
<td>(2,569,900)</td>
<td>($32,250)</td>
<td>($32,250)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>($1.2)</td>
<td>(2,301,300)</td>
<td>($27,100)</td>
<td>($27,100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronics &amp; Appliance Stores</td>
<td>($2.7)</td>
<td>(2,935,800)</td>
<td>($34,740)</td>
<td>($34,740)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td>($3.1)</td>
<td>(2,135,500)</td>
<td>($25,900)</td>
<td>($25,900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Material &amp; Supplies De</td>
<td>($1.1)</td>
<td>(1,761,300)</td>
<td>($21,860)</td>
<td>($21,860)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawn &amp; Garden Equipment &amp; Supplies Stores</td>
<td>$1.0</td>
<td>(2,335,900)</td>
<td>($28,800)</td>
<td>($28,800)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Beverage Stores</td>
<td>($3.5)</td>
<td>(2,957,700)</td>
<td>($34,165)</td>
<td>($34,165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocery Stores</td>
<td>($3.1)</td>
<td>(2,135,500)</td>
<td>($25,900)</td>
<td>($25,900)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty Food Stores</td>
<td>($2.6)</td>
<td>(1,436,800)</td>
<td>($17,720)</td>
<td>($17,720)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beer, Wine, and Liquor Stores</td>
<td>($1.2)</td>
<td>(1,051,700)</td>
<td>($13,005)</td>
<td>($13,005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>($2.2)</td>
<td>(1,740,500)</td>
<td>($21,597)</td>
<td>($21,597)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gasoline Stations</td>
<td>($3.0)</td>
<td>(2,058,300)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores</td>
<td>$6.9</td>
<td>(5,787,700)</td>
<td>($73,125)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clothing Stores</td>
<td>($3.0)</td>
<td>(3,747,100)</td>
<td>($45,085)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shoe Stores</td>
<td>($2.8)</td>
<td>(2,533,100)</td>
<td>($30,990)</td>
<td>($30,990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods Stores</td>
<td>$3.3</td>
<td>(1,353,100)</td>
<td>($16,410)</td>
<td>($16,410)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores</td>
<td>($3.3)</td>
<td>(1,346,300)</td>
<td>($16,590)</td>
<td>($16,590)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instrument Stores</td>
<td>$3.3</td>
<td>(1,346,300)</td>
<td>($16,590)</td>
<td>($16,590)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book, Periodical, and Music Stores</td>
<td>($2.6)</td>
<td>(6,443,700)</td>
<td>($78,250)</td>
<td>($78,250)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>($3.0)</td>
<td>(2,243,700)</td>
<td>($28,000)</td>
<td>($28,000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Stores Excluding Leased-Depts</td>
<td>($2.0)</td>
<td>(2,056,000)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>$4.1</td>
<td>(1,087,700)</td>
<td>($13,110)</td>
<td>($13,110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>($1.0)</td>
<td>(270,700)</td>
<td>($3,405)</td>
<td>($3,405)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florists</td>
<td>($2.0)</td>
<td>(1,013,700)</td>
<td>($12,840)</td>
<td>($12,840)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies, Stationery, and Salt Stores</td>
<td>($1.5)</td>
<td>(517,700)</td>
<td>($6,415)</td>
<td>($6,415)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Used Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>($2.0)</td>
<td>(1,371,700)</td>
<td>($17,130)</td>
<td>($17,130)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>($3.0)</td>
<td>(3,850,300)</td>
<td>($48,490)</td>
<td>($48,490)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonstore Retailers</td>
<td>($3.4)</td>
<td>(2,103,300)</td>
<td>($26,345)</td>
<td>($26,345)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Services &amp; Drinking Places</td>
<td>($3.2)</td>
<td>(5,965,300)</td>
<td>($75,400)</td>
<td>($75,400)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-Service Restaurants</td>
<td>($4.1)</td>
<td>(6,677,700)</td>
<td>($84,205)</td>
<td>($84,205)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited-Service Eating Places</td>
<td>($2.8)</td>
<td>(2,056,000)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
<td>($25,040)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Food Services</td>
<td>($2.0)</td>
<td>(1,087,700)</td>
<td>($13,110)</td>
<td>($13,110)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages</td>
<td>$3.1</td>
<td>(517,700)</td>
<td>($6,415)</td>
<td>($6,415)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Market Implications

Ardmore has several strong retail areas which are attracting significant development. As development continues to occur near the I-35 interchanges at W. Broadway and 13th Avenue, particularly with new hospital, office, and commercial uses, these areas have the potential for further attract additional development. However, it is important that new development complements and does not detract from existing uses and investment. Juxtaposition to the highway creates an ideal location for accommodating travelers while also providing dining and entertainment options for local residents.

Downtown Ardmore is seeing increased public and private investment and is trending positive. It is a unique destination for visitors and the heart of the community for residents. Potential exists to build off of current uses and continue to re-use vacant and underutilized buildings.

Community Profile
City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
**COMMUNITY PROFILE**

City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan

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**OFFICE**

Ardmore’s professional office inventory is somewhat limited. Existing office space tends to be single-story Class B or Class C inventory, with small floorplates. In some locations, converted single family homes now serve as offices. Office inventory is located mostly in/near the Downtown or the 12th Avenue or W. Broadway corridor: Several institutional uses have constructed quality office buildings in recent years, such as the Noble Foundation, Chickasaw Health Clinic, and Mercy Hospital; however, these are private, to-suit properties that are not rentable.

One of the larger office buildings in the community, the 9,000 sq. ft. Neustadt Plaza (533 W. Main Street) is fully occupied and listed on the market for $2.5 million.

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**INDUSTRIAL**

Ardmore’s industrial market is influenced by several factors: strategic location along I-35 between major metropolitan areas, two airports, local energy production, rail access, and membership within the Oklahoma Biotechnology Corridor (with the assistance of the Noble Foundation). The community is home to several large distribution facilities and a prominent tire manufacturing plant, as well as neighboring Valero Refinery. Currently, roughly 13% of Ardmore’s land is used for light industrial, industrial, or airport purposes.

Outside of several large independent facilities, much of Ardmore’s industry is found within existing industrial parks:

- **The Westport Industrial Park** is located on the western edge of Ardmore just past 1-35. Most notably, this includes a Best Buy distribution center. Westport has 69 available acres for development out of a total of 190 acres. Just south of this is the Michelle North America Plant, one of the largest employers in Ardmore. Lots are available from as small as 7.45 acres up to 53.0 acres. At the time of this report’s drafting, a new industrial building was being built at 2160 Cooper within the park.
- **The New Horizons Industrial Park** is located on the southeastern side of Ardmore. Out of 290 acres, 64.6 acres of developable land are available. Tenants include Dot Foods and Flanders Corporation.
- **Ardmore Industrial Airpark** is a former Air Force base located sixteen miles northeast of Ardmore, next to the Ardmore Municipal Airport. Tenants include King Aerospace, Lakeland Aviation, Beetle Plastics, Dollar General Distribution Center, East Jordan Iron Works, and Online Packaging. It has BNSF rail access. This park has a total of 2,955 acres of land, of which 1,465.82 acres are available.
- **Colvert Technology Park** is the newest of the four Ardmore industrial parks. Situated one mile west of Interstate 35, Colvert Park offers a large and unbroken tract of land suitable for a large-scale development or subdivision. With 47 developable acres, the project is part of a larger initiative to create a technology park in Ardmore focused on commercial ventures based on scientific research. At present, roughly 40 acres of the park remain available.

According to the Ardmore Development Authority, access to industrial spaces in Ardmore, the average asking rent (gross per square foot) is $3.00 for warehouses and $2.00 for industrial spaces. The warehouse vacancy rate is 11% and the industrial vacancy rate is around 13%.

**MARKET IMPLICATIONS**

Ardmore has a large supply of available industrial land, with more than 1,600 undeveloped acres available in four existing business parks. This is likely more than sufficient to support retention, recruitment, and expansion of Ardmore’s industrial workforce. Although Oklahoma provides a variety of incentives and tools to recruit and retain businesses, local business leaders, from stakeholder interviews, were concerned that these tools may be removed due to the state’s budget cuts. If this occurs, Ardmore should explore alternatives to compete within the market. For example, given Ardmore’s proximity to the State border, the city often competes with Texas for the location of industry and employment. Different policies and laws between each state affect the attractiveness of locating in Texas versus Oklahoma. While comparatively lower property taxes attract businesses to Oklahoma, the lack of state income tax is leveraged on the Texas side.
A field inventory of each block and every parcel within Ardmore was completed in Winter/Spring 2016, which informed that most of the City’s residential and commercial areas are well established. Within the City’s core, residential areas tend to be older and more modest, with newer, suburban-styled subdivisions generally established on the fringes of the city. Based on a thorough assessment, Ardmore’s existing land uses were classified into 17 categories. The definitions of each category are provided below and can be visualized on the accompanying map. This inventory forms the basis of the Land Use & Development Plan, which defines the nature of land uses as well as the desired character of larger areas of the community, and guides private development and property investment, City policy and development decisions, and capital improvements.

## Existing Land Use Composition

### AGRICULTURE & RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Agricultural and Rural Residential include land and facilities related to the cultivation of crops or the raising of livestock, farmsteads relating to farm operations, and single-family detached homes on large lots in the midst of a rural atmosphere.

### SINGLE FAMILY DETACHED

Single Family Detached include stand-alone single housing unit with a range of lot sizes.

### SINGLE FAMILY ATTACHED

Single Family Attached include housing units arranged as townhouses or duplexes that share a common wall, where entry to each unit is provided from an exterior entry.

### MULTI-FAMILY

Multi-Family include apartments or condominium buildings where entry to each unit is provided by an internal corridor or courtyard.

### MOBILE HOME

Mobile Home include semi-permanent housing units arranged in either planning mobile home parks or as stand-alone housing units.

### LOCAL COMMERCIAL

Local Commercial include single-story buildings with a mix of uses and multiple story buildings with restaurant, retail, and service uses on the ground floor and office or residential uses on upper floors.

### MIXED COMMERCIAL / MIXED-USE

Mixed Commercial / Mixed-Use includes single story buildings with a mix of uses and multiple story buildings with restaurant, retail, and service uses on the ground floor and office or residential uses on upper floors.

### REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Regional Commercial include commercial uses that are large in scale and draw from a regional consumer audience, such as big box retailers, movie theatres, and auto dealerships.

### HOSPITALITY

Hospitality include hotels and motels, Mixed-Use, including single story buildings, with a mix of uses and multiple story buildings with restaurant, retail, and service uses on the ground floor and office or residential uses on upper floors.

### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

Light Industrial include internal assembly, warehousing, storage, or distribution, typically with minimal impacts on surrounding properties.

### HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

Heavy Industrial include manufacturing and assembly operations with significant noise, vibration, odor, or other such impacts on surrounding uses.

### AIRPORT

Airport including both the Downtown Executive Airport and the Ardmore Municipal Airport.

### PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Parks & Open Space are outdoor spaces designated for public use and often programmed with athletic fields, playgrounds, paths, pools, or other similar amenities.

### PUBLIC/Semi-PUBLIC

Public / Semi-Public include government facilities, hospitals, schools, higher education facilities, community centers, and more that are generally accessible to the community or provide community services.

### UTILITY & RAIL

Utility & Rail include rights-of-way and supporting land uses.

### VACANT

Vacant include undeveloped sites that may be considered viable for development based on the absence of another active use, surrounding land use context, and absence of physical or natural constraints.

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City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City desires to update its Unified Development Code (UDC), which regulates the usage and density of land, as well as signage, subdivision development, parking, housing maintenance, landscaping, and more. These regulations have the expressed purpose of promoting the health, safety, convenience, order, prosperity, and general welfare of the people of Ardmore. The City of Ardmore contains 15 zoning districts and 4 overlay and special purpose districts. The City’s zoning districts should be consistent with the City’s land uses as they respond to demographic and market shifts. In addition, the zoning districts should effectively characterize the overall development character, while using supplemental regulations to address subtle variations. The following is an inventory of the City’s existing zoning districts, which summarizes the uses and densities allowed in each respective zone.

**Agriculture (AG)**
Agriculture (AG) is primarily for agricultural uses or the extraction of the various products such as oil, minerals, rock, and gravel from the earth on parcels of 20 acres or more in size.

**Rural Residential (RR)**
Rural Residential (RR) accommodates residential units on lot sizes of 5 acres or more within the fringes of urbanized areas.

**Suburban Residential (RS-40)**
Suburban Residential (RS-40) supports quiet, low density residential living on lot sizes of 1 acre or more.

**Single Family Detached (RS-9)**
Single Family Detached (RS-9) accommodates single family living on lot sizes of 9,000 ft² or greater. Single Family Detached/Attached (RS-6) accommodates slightly higher density single family living in both attached and detached units on lots of 6,000 ft².

**Single Family Detached/Attached (RS-6)**
Single Family Detached/Attached (RS-6) accommodates slightly higher density single family living in both attached and detached units on lots of 6,000 ft².

**Multi-Family Medium Density (RMM)**
Multi-Family Medium Density (RMM) supports moderate-density mixed-residential neighborhoods, allowing single family, duplex, town-homes, and multi-family dwellings capped at 35 feet.

**Multi-Family High Density (RMH)**
Multi-Family High Density (RMH) supports high-density mixed-residential neighborhoods, allowing duplexes and multi-family dwellings capped at 80 feet.

**Neighborhood Commercial (CN)**
Neighborhood Commercial (CN) accommodates retail and personal services of limited size (lot size of between 5,000 and 10,000 ft²) and service area, supporting residents in the adjacent neighborhoods.

**Commercial Corridor (CC)**
Commercial Corridor (CC) supports major retail and service activities that serve the entire community and beyond. There is no cap on building height.

**Mobile Home Park (MHP)**
Mobile Home Park (MHP) supports mobile home parks with a minimum site area of five acres.

**Downtown Commercial (CD)**
Downtown Commercial (CD) accommodates a mixed-use central business district and the surrounding blocks that contain apartments, public and semi-public uses and small businesses. There is no cap on building height.

**Light Industrial (IL)**
Light Industrial (IL) provides a location for industries that do not create nuisances.

**Heavy Industrial (IH)**
Heavy Industrial (IH) provides a location for industries that may create nuisances. The intent is to preserve land for such industry in locations with access to arterial streets and rail. Due to the objectionable impacts, special buffer or setback areas are required.

**Office (O)**
Office (O) supports general and professional offices of limited size (lot size of between 5,000 and 10,000 ft²), with the intent of buffering residential from more intensive commercial areas.

**Public Facilities & Institutions (PFI)**
Public Facilities & Institutions (PFI) provide for the development of public and quasi-public uses, including government buildings, institutional uses, public parks, open spaces and airports.

**Planned Unit Development (PUD)**
Planned Unit Development (PUD) helps implement “mixed-use development” in areas located along major traffic routes where large tracts of land exist (as identified in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan).
CHAPTER 3
A VISION FOR ARDMORE
The Vision is written as a retro-
spective that chronicles all that has
occurred since the City adopted its
new Comprehensive Plan in 2017. It
chronicles the accomplishments,
achievements, and successes in Ar-
dmore that were envisioned as part
of the planning process. The Vision
incorporates the main ideas and
recurring themes that emerged from
the visioning sessions, community
workshops and meetings, inter-
views, and questionnaires. The Vision
provides a foundation for the goals,
objectives, policies, and recommenda-
tions of the Comprehensive Plan.

IN THE
YEAR 2037...

The City of Ardmore has undergone a
remarkable evolution. Guided by the
recommendations of its Comprehensive
Plan, a number of decisions, develop-
ments and projects throughout the past
20 years have helped shape this proud
community. Through its quiet and
attractive residential neighborhoods,
high quality schools, active parks,
and vibrant Downtown, the City has
increasingly become a desirable place
to live and do business. Today, residents
enjoy a high-quality of life, businesses
are thriving, and visitors frequent the
City’s exciting destinations.

There is pride in ownership in all of
Ardmore’s neighborhoods. Whether
you live on the east or west, or north
or south, all of the City’s neighbor-
hoods are healthy. Reinvestment and
curb appeal strategies have prior-
itized restoring a healthy housing
market, allowed for the financing of
home repairs and maintenance, and
attracted developers and homebuy-
ers to the community. These efforts,
combined with consistent code
enforcement, have vastly contributed
to the stabilization of the City’s older
residential areas.

Revisions to the Unified Development
Code after the Plan’s adoption aligned
the City’s development regulations
with the recommendations of the Com-
prehensive Plan. Thanks to adjacency
requirements and an urban growth
boundary established in the Compre-
nhensive Plan, outward growth over the
past 20 years has been well managed.
Designed guidelines and a thorough
review process has helped elevate the
quality and diversity of Ardmore’s
new neighborhoods. New streets are
lined with sidewalks and trees, and
conservation development has helped
conserve precious natural resources
in the City’s growth areas while still
permitting development to occur.

ANCHORED by both City Hall and the
Carter County Courthouse, Downtown
remains the focal point of the commu-
ity. Wayfinding signage directs both
motorists and pedestrians to all of
downtown’s amenities, including the
new boutique hotel and designated
car-pool/ladk lots constructed to
address Downtown’s parking issues.

Amtrak’s Heartland Flyer, a route pro-
viding service between Oklahoma City
and Fort Worth, continues to stop at
Ardmore Station, where a much need-
ed Downtown park was constructed
shortly following the Plan’s adoption.
The new green space has been compli-
cent with improved streetscapes,
wayfinding, parking, public art, and
crosswalks, that together have dramatically changed
the appearance and perception of
Downtown Ardmore. With dining
and entertainment uses, supporting
office uses, and mixed-use buildings,
Downtown has become a truly unique
and exciting new neighborhood for
families, and young professionals to
live, work, and play.
Thanks largely in part to the Ardmore Convention Center, and the City’s strategic location along I-35, the local hotel industry has continued to flourish and has helped bolster and solidify 12th Avenue’s role as a regional commercial corridor. Chain restaurants, big box retailers, smaller format retailers, and local “mom and pops” provide residents and tourists with an abundance of places to eat and shop. Striving to remain competitive, Ardmore’s aging malls and plazas, such as Tiffany Plaza, have been renovated and rebranded, creating attractive, modern spaces in the City’s older commercial areas. Perhaps the most noteworthy accomplishment, however, is the new grocery store on the City’s east side.

Convenient access to a strong regional transportation system, large industrial areas compatible for reinvestment and redevelopment, and access to a large employment base, have helped Ardmore maintain its status as an attractive industrial/business park destination. Although Methodist, Valley, and Mercy Memorial Health are still the City’s largest employers, new industrial development in the Ardmore Airport and new interchange off I-35 and Exit 29 have led to an increase in Ardmore’s tax base and local job opportunities, making the “Ardmore vs. Plainview” schools is no longer a divisive issue in the community. Today, both school districts are excellent, on par with one another and provide quality education to the children of Ardmore. The result of the improved school system has been profound. Not long ago, development pressure was mostly within the Plainview School District’s catchment areas. This outward western growth strained City infrastructure and caused disinvestment within older areas further compounding decline in the City’s older neighborhoods. With local, state, and Federal assistance, school districts are no longer a factor of consideration for new development or home buying. This has resulted in more young families moving to all areas of Ardmore.

The last couple of decades have also seen a number of improvements to the City’s transportation systems. The frustrations of travelling east and west through Ardmore are now a thing of the past, thanks to recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan and the City’s great working relationship with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). The one-way pairs of Main Street and Broadway Street have been “uncoupled” and Sam Noble Parkway has been extended west, connecting with 12th Avenue. This helped create a “new” State Route 199, and along with other improvements, has created a well-connected network of streets, sidewalks, and trails.

Providing high-quality, affordable education has been a top priority for the City. Working closely with the school districts and the community, the performance, image, and reputation of the schools has improved. Through improved staffing, curriculums, and marketing campaigns, complemented by reinvestment in school facilities, the “Ardmore vs. Plainview” schools is no longer a divisive issue in the community. Today, both school districts are excellent, on par with one another and provide quality education to the children of Ardmore. The result of the improved school system has been profound. Not long ago, development pressure was mostly within the Plainview School District’s catchment areas. This outward western growth strained City infrastructure and caused disinvestment within older areas further compounding decline in the City’s older neighborhoods. With local, state, and Federal assistance, school districts are no longer a factor of consideration for new development or home buying. This has resulted in more young families moving to all areas of Ardmore.

Through partnering with the BNSF Railway, the City was able to enhance its railroad crossings with lighting and landscaping, as well as establish a safe and attractive “Quiet Zone” in the Downtown. Conversations with BNSF have also sparked a larger dialogue with the ODOT, the Southern Oklahoma Development Association, the Association of Soth Central Oklahoma Governments, and others about the potential for a State and regional trail along the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway, also known as the “Frisco” Railroad.

Coordinated with all of the investment and redevelopment has been an improved community image. Several enhancements have helped overhaul the City’s identity and public image, which has helped create positive perceptions of Ardmore. Attractive community gateways, consisting of signage and landscaping, greet visitors at all major entry points. An aesthetically pleasing streetscape, high quality development, attractive architecture, and community events, including Ardmore’s annual birthday celebration, have all helped strengthen community pride.
CHAPTER 4
GOALS & OBJECTIVES
The City of Ardmore’s Comprehensive Plan is an expression of the community’s desires for the place Ardmore becomes in the future. Through recommendations, and established goals and objectives, the Plan provides a flexible policy guide for decision-making and community action. This section presents the Comprehensive Plan’s goals and objectives which provide the framework for future planning recommendations, policies, and potential projects and actions.

**Goals** describe desired end situations toward which planning efforts should be directed. They are broad and long-range, and represent an end to be sought, even if they are never fully realized.

**Objectives** describe more specific actions that should be undertaken to advance toward the overall goals. They provide more precise and measurable guidelines for planning action.

Together, the goals and objectives provide specific direction and establish the broad picture of what the City of Ardmore wants to accomplish within its Comprehensive Plan. Goals and objectives combine to provide a course of action and serve as a guide for evaluating specific projects and land use alternatives.

The goals and objectives presented in this section are based on: 1) Input from residents; 2) Input from Ardmore’s business community; 3) Discussions with community leaders and facility providers; 4) Focus groups and interviews with community stakeholders; 5) Input from City staff and the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee; and 6) Input from both elected and appointed officials, including Ardmore’s Planning Commission and City Council.

**HOUSING**

**GOAL**

Maintain the City’s image and desirability as a great place to live by preserving and enhancing the diversity, quality, character, safety, affordability, and appeal of residential neighborhoods.

**OBJECTIVES**

1. Provide incentives for developers to build market-rate housing in central and east Ardmore to provide attractive housing options for families.
2. Promote residential development of a variety of housing types and densities in accordance with the Land Use Plan, and ensure that the Zoning Ordinance and other regulatory tools are updated appropriately.
3. Prioritize the rehabilitation of vacant housing through incentive programs, such as low-income housing tax credits (LIHTC) and historic rehabilitation tax credits (HRT).
4. Work with property owners and the development community to prioritize infill development on vacant lots, primarily on those in the east side and close to Downtown.
5. Establish multiple tiers of growth and maintenance programs, such as low-income housing (e.g., for-sale and rental) within the City that meet the specific needs of all residents, including families, multi-family, and senior residents.
6. Establish regulations that allow for and encourage mixed-use development and more variety in affordable housing options, such as secondary suites above garages and tiny houses.
7. Work with property management companies to enforce property maintenance requirements in private residential developments.
8. Establish a property rental registry program to increase landlord and lessee accountability.
9. Establish programs to encourage and incentivize reinvestment in the existing housing stock, particularly in the east side.
10. Promote the development of smaller, furnished units of temporary housing for students and employees to live in during the week.
11. Utilize conservation design in new residential developments to protect natural areas and increase open space and recreation opportunities.
12. Amend development policies to ensure that new neighborhoods include basic pedestrian infrastructure and open space allowances.
13. Explore the creation of a property maintenance program to assist residents, particularly seniors, with affordable lawn cutting and maintenance services.
14. Support the provision of a variety of housing types (e.g., single-family, multi-family, and senior housing) and economic choices (e.g., for-sale and rental) within the City that meet the specific needs of all residents, including those related to accessibility, multi-sensory technologies, and independent living.
15. Maintain the existing affordable housing stock, so that long-term residents and workers can afford to live in Ardmore.
COMMERCIAL AREAS

GOAL
Maintain attractive and healthy commercial areas throughout the City that provide a range of goods and services to local residents and attract shoppers from outside the City.

OBJECTIVES
1. Promote a healthy and mutually reinforcing mix of commercial, retail, and service uses along key corridors within the City, including 12th Avenue, Rockford Road, Commerce Street, and Main Street.
2. Ensure that new commercial development and redevelopment is designed in scale with, and complementary to, existing adjacent development that aligns with a shared vision for future character, as described in the UDC.
3. Add sidewalks and trees to parkways along Main Street/US Highway 199, 12th Avenue, and Commerce Street to beautify the surrounding areas and improve pedestrian access/mobility.
4. Work with ODOT to facilitate desired improvements within their right-of-way, including improved landscaping, lighting, and gateway signage.
5. Implement more systematic and proactive property maintenance and code enforcement processes in commercial areas of the City to ensure that these areas remain high-quality for residents and visitors alike.
6. Modify the Chapter 3, Sec 703 of the UDC to require the installation of perimeter landscaping around parking lots to soften their appearance and beautify the area.
7. Establish design and improvement standards for commercial areas to guide the scale, appearance, orientation, and overall character of new development and property improvements/investment.
8. Work with property owners and developers to retrofit existing large parking lots with interior landscaped islands and perimeter landscaping to soften their appearance and help beautify Ardmore’s commercial areas.
9. Integrate existing programs (e.g., The Ardmore Main Street Program) with potential new funding sources to assist businesses and property owners with façade improvements, landscaping, parking improvements, and modernization of aging infrastructure and facilities.
10. Initiate programs to encourage the improvement and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings and areas which are, or are becoming, functionally obsolete, including improvements to infrastructure, technologies, functionality, access, and operational footprints.
11. Rethink parking requirements in an effort to reduce onsite parking, allowing for more future development and maximized commercial frontage along major corridors.
12. Work with property owners at the Ardmore Commons and Mountain View Mall locations to accommodate infill development and more efficiently utilize lot space.
13. Actively use development tools such as Tax Increment Finance (TIF) districts and tax abatements to recruit businesses and promote redevelopment of vacant and underperforming commercial areas and structures.
14. Continue to evaluate the costs and benefits of using incentives and other techniques to initiate the redevelopment of key opportunity sites.
15. Encourage and promote shared parking programs and policies in commercial areas wherever possible.
16. Work with ODOT to install highway signs promoting hotels, gas stations, and restaurants along Broadway Street, Holiday Drive, and 12th Avenue.
17. Work with ODOT to beautify the ROW of the east side of Commerce Street through landscaping and repairing broken concrete.
DOWNTOWN

GOAL
Use urban design, infill development, and redevelopment to bring more investment to Downtown Ardmore, transforming it into an exciting, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use destination. Maintain Downtown as a vibrant and healthy mixed-use focal point and activity center.

OBJECTIVES
1. Continue to revitalize Downtown with a mixture of uses including commercial, office, restaurant, and residential.
2. Maintain Downtown as a pedestrian-oriented area that is unlike any other commercial area in the community through mixed-use development and infrastructure focused on walkability.
3. Encourage businesses to accommodate cyclists by installing bicycle racks at their storefronts.
4. Modify the Chapter 3, Sec 703 of the UDC to require the installation of perimeter landscaping around parking lots.
5. Work with and encourage property owners to retrofit existing parking lots with perimeter landscaping.
6. Permit and encourage temporary or seasonal uses, such as a farmer’s market, on underutilized sites and community open spaces that can attract desirable and complementary activities to Downtown.
7. Work with the development community to encourage and promote development of the properties along the western side of Caddo Street NE just north and just south of 2nd Avenue NE with affordable, mixed-used commercial and residential development.
8. Focus efforts and resources on development projects that are likely to catalyze other investment based on the population and benefits they bring to Downtown.
9. Zoning for Downtown should be analyzed and amended if necessary to adequately accommodate appropriate new development and establish the desirable physical form of Downtown.
10. Work with property owners to retrofit the properties along the western side of Caddo Street NE just south of 2nd Avenue NE with a landscaped buffer between adjacent residential.
11. Promote and encourage shared parking arrangements and facilities wherever feasible to minimize the land area dedicated to parking within Downtown.
12. Consider establishing a program to assist with improvements to existing buildings that bring them to current codes and standards so that they can sustain occupancy and market competitiveness.
13. Work with property owners to enhance commercial areas along Mill Street and Main Street with planters and landscaping to better separate the sidewalks and street, add enclosure, and increase the pedestrian-friendliness of the area.
14. Encourage and promote infill development at the northeast corner of A Street NW and 2nd Avenue NW.
INDUSTRIAL AREAS

GOAL
Encourage the continued growth of important industries in Ardmore to provide area residents with employment opportunities, buttress the local economy, and generate revenue for the continued delivery of a high level of municipal services.

OBJECTIVES
1. Identify industrial properties that may be potential brownfield sites in order to assess key redevelopment sites and seek funding for redevelopment.
2. Establish and maintain regular lines of communication with Ardmore’s larger industrial businesses, such as Michelin and Valero, to stay informed about expansion plans and service needs.
3. Preserve the integrity of strong industrial areas by preventing the encroachment of businesses or land uses that could impact the long-term viability of industrial areas.
4. Encourage and promote the redevelopment of the vacant sites.
5. Encourage and promote the rehabilitation of older industrial buildings in areas that are becoming functionally obsolete or undesirable, including improvements to loading docks, technology infrastructure, access, building facades, signage, streetscapes, landscaping, and parking areas to accommodate more appropriate and market-viable uses.
6. Work with property owners to enhance industrial buildings and sites with perimeter landscaping around parking lots and foundation landscaping against buildings.
7. Work with property owners of Bluebonnet Feeds improve the site’s compatibility with the City’s desired vision for a vibrant and pedestrian-friendly Downtown.
8. Encourage the use of green technology and best management practices (BMPs) in the development and redevelopment of industrial uses.
9. Partner with local artists, the Goddard Arts Center, and the Ardmore School District to add murals and mosaics to the facades of industrial buildings in Downtown.
10. Require all industrial development to meet specific applicable performance standards for noise, air, odor, and any other forms of environmental pollution.
11. Use appropriate setbacks, buffering, and site design to minimize the negative impacts of industrial uses on adjacent areas.
12. Amend the Chapter 7, Sec 703 of the UDC to ensure that all industrial uses are effectively screened from adjacent properties and public rights-of-way, through the use of native landscaping and attractive fencing.
13. Identify strategic partnerships between local employers and educational providers for workforce development programs.
TRANSPORTATION & CIRCULATION

GOAL
Design a multi-modal transportation system that promotes economic vitality, strengthens the community, and is safe and accessible for all of its users.

OBJECTIVES
1. Work closely with existing business owners to consolidate or remove unnecessary, redundant, obsolete, or unsafe curb cuts by providing cross access between and shared access into businesses wherever possible.
2. Protect and improve the function of the street network through controlled access, land use decisions, and street and intersection design improvements.
3. Work with ODOT to improve the road alignment and pedestrian safety of problematic intersections.
4. Ensure that adequate resources are made available for the maintenance of City streets and public rights-of-way.
5. As regional commercial develops around the southwark interchange at US 70 and I-35, work with ODOT to ensure that signal timing is safe and efficient.
6. Establish West Broadway Street as a commercial corridor and gateway to the City.
7. Work with ODOT and BNSF to implement either an underpass or overpass through the railroad south of Rockford and 4th Street in order to install traffic controls at Rockford and 4th Street.
8. Coordinate with ODOT to ensure Commerce Street and Veterans Boulevard, as designated truck routes, safely accommodate vehicles, buses, and non-motorized modes of transport.
9. Adopt a roadway connectivity ordinance to increase access, mobility, and safety as new development and roadways are constructed.
10. Consider priority parking spaces for no- and low-emissions vehicles in all public parking facilities and the provision of similar spaces in private parking facilities.
11. Explore the feasibility of a car-sharing program and provide development incentives for the provision of car-share parking facilities.
12. Install adequate lighting at all railroad crossings.
13. Work with the BNSF Railway to implement a quiet zone in the Downtown.
14. Work with the BNSF Railway to relocate the switching yard from the Downtown.
15. Amend the Chapter 7, Sec 702 of UDC to require rail lines to be screened with adequate vegetative buffering and fencing when adjacent to residential areas, and to be enhanced with landscaping when adjacent to commercial areas.
16. Work with SORTS and the Chickasaw Nation Transportation Services to assess transit demand, routes, and bus shelters.
17. Establish a wayfinding signage system throughout the City that directs motorists to key retail, office, industrial, and community facility destinations.
18. Establish specific traffic and circulation management strategies for areas impacted by congestion at specific times, such as neighborhood blocks surrounding schools or major destinations.
19. Work with Amtrak to enhance the area around the train stop, promoting it as a regional hub and economic asset.
20. Repurpose vacant and underutilized alleys to add vibrancy to residential neighborhoods.
21. Establish complete streets in Downtown Ardmore to create a safe, accessible area for all modes of transportation.
22. Parking needs, traffic issues, and potential impacts to existing or future industrial business operations should be considered when uses such as entertainment, recreation, community facilities, and schools locate near industrial areas.
NON-MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

GOAL
Create a complete, connected system of sidewalks, bicycle paths, and trails to increase the overall public health and safety of the community and link pedestrians and cyclists to employment, shopping, and recreational areas.

OBJECTIVES
1. Encourage property owners to maintain sidewalks in their neighborhoods.
2. Where appropriate, encourage new development/redevelopment to include connections and amenities for pedestrians, cyclists, and commuters.
3. Identify key pedestrian routes and budget for streetlight replacement along these routes to include pedestrian-scaled lighting amenities, and identify areas throughout the City needing enhanced lighting for pedestrian safety.
4. Maintain and expand the sidewalk and crosswalk network throughout the City’s commercial districts, ensuring that sidewalks are located along both sides of all streets within these areas that connect to businesses and other destinations, and that crosswalks are provided that enhance accessibility across significant traffic corridors.
5. Continue to implement traffic calming measures where appropriate on neighborhood streets, Downtown streets, and elsewhere to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.
6. Explore the use of recapture agreements and special assessments to fill in sidewalk gaps.
7. Increase, enhance, and extend bicycle lanes to create a connected bicycle network.
8. Establish the Downtown as a priority pedestrian and bicycle improvement area by developing connected network of on-street bicycle lanes linking Main Street with Rockford Road, 12th Avenue, and Veterans Boulevard.
9. Educate pedestrians and cyclists using signage and outreach on the safe usage of roads and trails.
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL
Ensures the provision of high-quality public facilities, including municipal and educational facilities, for all residents of the City of Ardmore.

OBJECTIVES
1. Amend the Chapter 7, Sec 702 of the UDC, as well as utility and building standards, to integrate utility boxes into building and site designs, requiring utilities to be placed to the rear of structures when possible and using urban design elements to shield utilities from pedestrian view.
2. Maintain a consistent, yet flexible, budgeting process that can adapt to changing economic conditions.
3. Ensure that the City continues to benefit from an adequate level of fire and police protection throughout the City.
4. Using various design and signage tools, reinforce community landmarks such as City Hall, historic homes, and structures in and around the Downtown area.
5. Work with the school districts to review the existing parking facilities, buildings, drop-off/pick-up areas, and bus parking, including ingress and egress, to ensure they are adequate and if not, identify opportunities for improvement.
6. Enhance the physical relationship between school facilities and surrounding neighborhoods through enhanced pedestrian connections and better traffic management for buses and vehicles during peak traffic times.
7. Work with school districts, residents, and appropriate transportation agencies to develop access and circulation improvement plans for school zones to minimize traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety.
8. Facilitate various activities between the Ardmore and Plainview school districts to help eliminate the perception divide and build a mutually beneficial relationship between them.
9. Facilitate the use of the Ardmore Public Library and municipal spaces to host programs and services for students interested in building their professional skills.
10. Encourage the expansion of organizations like Sunshine Industries, Inc. to provide additional supportive adult day services for residents.
PARKS & RECREATION

GOAL
Expand and enhance the City’s parks and recreation facilities, maintain the health of its lakes and reservoirs, and ensure that they are accessible to all residents.

OBJECTIVES
1. Where appropriate, collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Department to identify grants and secure alternative funding for parks, open space, trail segments, trail connections, and other recreation amenities for the community.
2. Create and adopt an Image and Identity Plan to provide guidance on the appropriate locations for wayfinding and gateway signage, as well as signage design standards.
3. Install cohesive wayfinding signage along existing bicycle routes from Veterans Boulevard to Lake Murray Drive to improve non-motorized access to parks and recreation facilities.
4. Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to install wayfinding signage along trails and greenways to improve access to Ardmore’s natural features and outdoor recreation.
5. Work with the BNSF Railway to create a trail by rail Downtown Ardmore along the rail line in order to beautify the area and provide additional recreation to nearby neighborhoods.
6. Convert unused, unmaintained alleys into connected trails for residential areas.
7. Consider amending Chapter 1, Sec 315 of the UDC to require developers to contribute to the construction and maintenance of parks and trails.

OPEN SPACE & NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL
Ensure the preservation, protection, and enhancement of Ardmore’s tree population, wetlands, lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and floodplain to minimize flooding, promoting environmental stewardship, and maintain healthy, diverse ecosystems for all of Ardmore’s residents to enjoy.

OBJECTIVES
1. Provide opportunities for increased public participation in environmental advocacy.
2. Review and update the species list in Chapter 2, Article IX of the Code of Ordinances to ensure that it contains an updated, diverse list of native tree species and invasive plant species, as well as clearly states the prohibition of planting invasive tree species.
3. Collaborate with the Parks and Recreation Department to ensure adequate resources for the maintenance of City-owned environmentally-sensitive lands and to continue restoration, management, and long-term stewardship of all natural landscapes in the City, especially high-quality, diverse native landscape systems.
4. Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to create a Public Areas Beautification Plan for the City which should include recommendations for improving and increasing green space.
5. Create a tree preservation ordinance to ensure that the City is comprised of a diverse mix of young, medium-aged, and mature trees of various species.
6. Explore sustainably-focused strategies to improve water quality in stormwater detention ponds in the City to prevent or minimize the formation of algae, pest breeding habitat, and plant, animal, and insect species known to be invasive to natural areas. Strategies include reduction in use of lawn chemicals, infiltration/treatment with green infrastructure such as bio-retention for smaller rain events upstream of ponds, constructed wetlands/floaters, etc., and increasing green space.
7. Where feasible, amend Chapter 7, Sec 701 of the UDC to require the installation of trees in parkways and around parking lots for new developments.
8. Establish and/or strengthen zoning, development, and other appropriate regulations to protect and maintain floodplains, flood-prone areas, wetlands, remnant natural areas, mature native tree stands, and other environmentally-sensitive landscape elements.
9. Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to install environmental education and interpretive signage throughout the community in locations with natural areas and environmental assets.
10. Continue working with the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department to regularly review and monitor water quality and the health of aquatic ecosystems.
11. Amend Chapter 3 of the UDC to require appropriate setbacks and vegetative buffering around creeks, wetlands, and floodways to protect them from the negative impacts of development, minimize incidences of flooding and soil erosion, reduce sedimentation, and improve water quality.
CHAPTER 5
LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT
The Land Use & Development Plan presents a set of overarching strategies to guide future land use and investment within the City of Ardmore and its planning area. The Plan takes into account a wide range of factors including existing land use, an assessment of existing physical conditions, current demographic trends, infrastructure capacity, and the desires and aspirations of the Ardmore community expressed through outreach conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.

**PLACE TYPE APPROACH TO LAND USE PLANNING**

The Comprehensive Plan uses a “place type” based approach to guide future land use planning. Areas within Ardmore have been classified into 10 unique place types. Unlike traditional land use designations, which specify uses on a parcel-by-parcel basis, the place types define the nature of uses and desired character for a larger area. This approach allows for greater flexibility regarding the future land use decisions for individual properties and development. Further, it acknowledges that individual land uses have a significant impact on those around them. Addressing land use on a larger scale helps to build an understanding of what distinct areas of the community should look like and how uses can interact and collaborate with each other.

Each of Ardmore’s 10 place types describes the desired character, land uses, built form, and level of connectivity for areas included within that classification. These elements should guide private development and property investment, City policy and development decisions, and capital improvements that together will help strengthen or transition an area to its ideal form and character over time. Additionally, this approach allows individual properties, proposals, and projects to be evaluated with regard to how they conform within their “place.” In this way, the place types are not a strict set of rules regarding land use, but rather a guide that can respond to the context of distinct situations and encourage the creation of dynamic places to shape the Ardmore community.

Land use place types have been designated to areas of the community based on existing land uses, built form, physical conditions, growth trends, and community input. Upon adoption of the City’s Comprehensive Plan the City should regularly review the Map and individual place types to ensure that land uses are responsive to demographic and market shifts.

**TIERED GROWTH**

It is vital for the City to direct development and investment for the efficient use of municipal services and infrastructure. By 2020, the City of Ardmore is projected to grow by six percent in population and five-and-a-half percent in number of households. The City of Ardmore’s existing municipal area can accommodate this growth, and then some (for more information, please refer to Housing Needs at page 72). To effectively guide new efficient growth, the City should create multiple “tiers”, growing outward from the City’s existing urbanized core.
The Agriculture & Rural Residential Place Type consists of areas of extremely low density within the municipal limits of the City of Ardmore, but outside of the urbanized area. The Agriculture & Rural Residential Place Type generally includes land use for agricultural production, supporting residential homes, and large-lot rural subdivisions. These areas are of the lowest density in Ardmore and also include large expanses of undeveloped land and natural areas. Located outside of the Ardmore’s urban core, uses may not be directly served by community services and infrastructure, particularly when compared with other residential areas near the City’s core.

New development of other Place Types (i.e. Fringe Residential) within the Agriculture & Rural Residential areas should be discouraged, limiting the conversion of these areas to more intense development. Instead, the City should focus on development and infill redevelopment in other residential place types within City’s established urban core to reduce service extensions, which may overburden the City’s existing infrastructure. In addition, the City should incorporate green infrastructure’s best practices into the site design of new developments to lessen the load on existing municipal infrastructure and reduce the consumption of natural resources.

**P.L.A.C.E. TYPE**

**AGRICULTURAL / RURAL RESIDENTIAL**

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Agriculture & Rural Residential Place Type include:

- Farms, plant nurseries, and other agricultural uses for growing crops and plants.
- Detached single-family homes as farmsteads, on large rural lots, and in existing rural subdivisions.
- Barns, stables, and kennels and other agricultural accessory structures.
- Undeveloped and natural areas preserve the natural landscape and help to mitigate the effects of agricultural uses and development, such as preventing soil erosion.

**LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT**

City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
URBAN FORM
Key attributes of the urban form within the Agriculture & Rural Residential Place Type include:
» Sparsely settled land in both open and cultivated states.
» Farmhouses, cabins, homes, and villas with varied orientation, placement and size.
» Agricultural buildings and accessory structures, sometimes clustered, surrounded by farmland or open space.
» Subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas adhere to the principles of conservation design, preserving existing natural resources by clustering residential dwellings together with a minimal development footprint.

CONNECTIVITY
Key attributes of connectivity within the Agriculture & Residential Place Type include:
» Automobile access to individual properties through driveways.
» Sidewalks or pedestrian pathways may provide access to residential dwellings directly adjacent to urbanized areas.
» Nearby regional trails and trailheads may provide access to some areas.
The Fringe Residential Place Type includes medium to low density residential neighborhoods on the periphery and outside of Ardmore’s urban core. This Place Type serves as a type of transition between urban and rural residential options. These areas tend to offer newer housing, typically in the form of larger houses and lot sizes than those in the Traditional Neighborhood Place Type. Management of these areas and types of investment should support high quality residential products while limiting suburban growth which may overextend community services. In addition, green infrastructure’s best practices should be incorporated into the site design of new developments to lessen the load on existing municipal infrastructure and reduce the consumption of natural resources.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Fringe Residential Place Type include:

- Single-family detached dwellings as the main type of housing.
- Single-family attached dwellings, such as townhomes, strategically integrated with single-family detached dwellings to maintain the character of the neighborhood.
- Apartment buildings and other multi-family dwellings, integrated into a larger cohesive development to assist in transitioning to commercial and/or higher density areas.
- Subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas adhere to the principles of conservation design, preserving existing natural resources by clustering residential dwellings together with a minimal development footprint.
- Public and Semi-Public facilities such as schools, fire stations, and religious institutions provide necessary public amenities, such as education and emergency response services.
- Public parks and open spaces improve social wellbeing and public health as open areas for interaction and recreation.
URBAN FORM
Key attributes of the urban form within the Fringe Residential Place Type include:
» Single-family houses, townhomes, and multi-family dwellings oriented to the street.
» Variable front- and side-yard setbacks, with a general rhythm and consistency by street and/or subdivision.
» Attached and detached garages, covered parking areas, sheds, and other residential accessory buildings.
» Surface parking lots for multi-family developments adequately screened, incorporate landscaped islands when necessary.
» Structures are similar in age, architectural style, scale, and overall design.
» Subdivisions and larger developments incorporate green infrastructure’s best practices to mitigate stormwater runoff.
» Mature trees are preserved to maintain character, stormwater benefits, shade, and wildlife habitats.
» Overhead power lines are buried and other unsightly utilities are screened from view.
» Subdivisions has a complete sidewalk network
» Sidewalk networks are well connected with adjacent neighborhoods and nearby commercial areas.
» Bicycle lanes or paths along key routes connect with neighboring residential areas and nearby destinations, such as commercial areas, schools, and parks.
» All intersections provide safe crossing points for pedestrians, including marked crosswalks and signage.
» Automobile access to individual properties is consistent across entire blocks, provided by driveways.

CONNECTIVITY
Key attributes of connectivity within the Fringe Residential Place Type include:
» Walking paths, trails, and other designated routes offer additional access and recreational opportunities.
The Traditional Neighborhood Place Type includes older residential neighborhoods within the City’s urbanized footprint, largely concentrated north, east, and south of Downtown Ardmore. The Traditional Neighborhood Place Type features an older housing stock on grid block patterns. This Place Type provides housing options in a more urban setting, on typically smaller lots compared to the Suburban Residential Place Type.

The Traditional Neighborhood Place Type has easy access to commercial areas, parks and open space, community facilities, and other destinations. It consists of dense, walkable neighborhoods, and where reinvestment, upkeep, maintenance, and pride in ownership is vital to the neighborhood’s stability. Additions, significant renovations, and new construction should consider the existing scale, style and character of the surrounding area.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Traditional Neighborhood Place Type include:

- Single-family detached dwellings as the main type of housing.
- Single-family attached dwellings, such as townhomes, strategically integrated with single-family detached dwellings to maintain the character of the neighborhood.
- Apartment buildings and other multi-family dwellings, placed on block ends and edges of traditional neighborhoods where they assist in transitioning to commercial or higher density areas.
- Where embedded within the neighborhood, multi-family dwellings and attached units match the character of surrounding residential uses.
- Accessory uses, such as secondary suites, are well-maintained.
- Urban farms, community gardens, and expanded side yards occupy vacant residential lots.
- Public and Semi-Public facilities, such as schools, fire stations, and religious institutions, provide necessary public amenities, such as education and emergency response services.
- Public parks and open spaces improve social well-being and public health as open areas for recreation.
URBAN FORM

Key attributes of the urban form within the Traditional Neighborhood Place Type include:

» Single-family houses, townhomes, and multi-family dwellings oriented to the street.
» Variable front- and side-yard setbacks, with a general rhythm and consistency, by street.
» Attached or detached garages, covered parking areas, sheds, secondary suites, and other residential accessory buildings.

» Structures vary in age, architectural style, scale, and overall design.
» Residential blocks are fully developed and well-maintained, with minimal vacant lots and structures.
» Surface parking lots for multi-family developments adequately screened, incorporate landscaped islands when necessary.
» Historic homes are preserved and enhanced.

» Mature trees are preserved to maintain character, stormwater benefits, shade, and wildlife habitats.
» Overhead power lines are buried and other unsightly utilities are located behind properties.
» Pedestrian-scaled street lighting is present along residential access streets.

CONNECTIVITY

Key attributes of connectivity within the Traditional Neighborhood Place Type include:

» Sidewalks are well maintained and connected with adjacent neighborhoods and commercial areas.
» Bicycle lanes or paths along key routes connect with neighboring residential areas and nearby destinations, such as commercial areas, schools, and parks.
» Pedestrian access to individual properties is consistent across entire blocks, either provided by driveways or alleys.

» On-street parking with varying hours accommodates visitors or residents while discouraging overcrowding where necessary.
» All intersections provide safe crossing points for pedestrians, including marked crosswalks, signage, and other elements.
The Neighborhood Commercial Place Type is typically located adjacent to, or embedded within, existing residential neighborhoods. The Place Type acts as a neighborhood shopping district, supporting nearby residents with day-to-day goods and services within a short walk or convenient drive from their homes. They also serve as hubs of activity and socialization at the neighborhood-level. Compared to other commercial place types, Neighborhood Commercial is the lowest in intensity and scale. Businesses catering to a more city-wide or regional market, drawing visitors from all over and generating non-local traffic, are better located in other appropriate commercial place types.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Neighborhood Commercial Place Type include:
- Convenience retail and small service stations offer quick access to goods and services.
- Restaurants, cafes, and bars provide a comfortable setting to eat and socialize.
- Day-to-day retail and service businesses, such as dry cleaners, salons, banks, and bodegas support daily tasks by offering quick services.
- Professional and medical offices, such as branch banks, pharmacies, dentists’ offices, or accounting firms provide more specialized services.

**URBAN FORM**

Key attributes of the urban form within the Neighborhood Commercial Place Type include:
- Single and lower multi-story structures oriented toward the street.
- Commercial uses screened from neighboring residential neighborhoods.
- Setbacks varying by use and location, with minimal or nonexistent setbacks and side yards creating a consistent streetwall and walkable aesthetic in some areas.
Parking located on-street or in-screened, off-street lots, ideally situated behind buildings. Surface parking lots are screened with plants and, where possible, incorporate landscaped islands. Mature trees are preserved to maintain character, shade, stormwater benefits, and wildlife habitats.

- Single-family detached structures on busy streets have been adaptively reused for commercial and low-intensity office uses.
- Overhead power lines are buried and other unsightly utilities are located behind properties.
- Street lighting that caters to both automobiles and pedestrians.

CONNECTIVITY

Key attributes of connectivity within the Neighborhood Commercial Place Type include:

- Intersections and key locations along neighborhood corridors provide safe crossing points for pedestrians, including marked crosswalks, timed counters, pedestrian refuge islands where appropriate, and other elements.
- Mid-block crossings calm traffic and create connections for pedestrians and cyclists where necessary.
- Where possible, off-street parking lots are accessed by side streets or alleys to maintain an attractive, safe, walkable streetscape for pedestrians to enjoy.
- On-street parallel parking with varying hours allows visitors to access nearby businesses while discouraging overcrowding.
- Streetscaping, sidewalks, benches, trash receptacles, and other public amenities encourage walkability and social interaction at the neighborhood level.
- Sidewalks are well-maintained and connect with adjacent neighborhoods.
- Where possible, walking paths, trails, and other designated routes offer additional pedestrian access.
- Bicycle parking and other improvements support bikability and active transportation to Neighborhood Commercial areas.
The Corridor Commercial Place Type is located along high traffic arterial roadways which act as primary routes through the community, such as Commerce Street. The Place Type acts as a primary shopping district for Ardmore that offers a mix of day-to-day necessities as well as specialized goods and services. The position and orientation of these areas conveniently serve multiple residential neighborhoods throughout the entire Ardmore community. The Corridor Commercial Place Type allows for the greatest flexibility with regards to intensity and scale of development, supporting both smaller, local businesses as well as major national retailers and chain restaurants.

LAND USE & ACTIVITY

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Corridor Commercial Place Type include:

- Restaurants, cafes, and bars, including franchise and drive-thru restaurants, offer a variety of food options.
- Day-to-day retail and service businesses, such as grocery stores, salons, convenience stores, and dry cleaners, provide basic goods and services.
- Specialized retail and service businesses, such as hardware, office, or appliance stores, support individuals and businesses with specialized goods and services.
- Professional and medical offices, such as branch banks, pharmacies, dentists’ offices, or accounting firms, provide more specialized services.
- Entertainment uses, such as movie theaters and bowling alleys, provide entertainment and amusement.
- Auto-oriented uses, such as gas stations and auto-repair shops, support daily and periodic vehicle service needs like gasoline and oil changes.
- Public and Semi-Public facilities, such as fire stations and religious institutions, provide necessary protection and public amenities.
URBAN FORM

Key attributes of the urban form within the Corridor Commercial Place Type include:

» Generally shorter, 1-2 story structures with public entrances oriented toward the street.

» Businesses are located in stand-alone, strip/convenience centers, neighborhood centers, and/or with anchor tenants.

» Building setbacks allow room for on-site parking and automobile access from the street.

» On-site parking lots include screening, landscaped areas, pedestrian pathways, and other elements to break up large areas of pavement and soften the views of parking areas.

» Inviting, transparent storefronts and attractive entrances.

» Properties feature dedicated landscaping, signage, and other placemaking elements that beautify and establish an identity for these commercial areas.

» Trees are preserved to maintain shade and create pedestrian-friendly areas.

» Corridor Commercial areas are screened and/or buffered from adjacent residential neighborhoods with attractive fencing and/or landscaping.

» Single-family dwellings along busy streets are either adaptively reused or assembled redeveloped for commercial and office uses.

CONNECTIVITY

Key attributes of connectivity within the Corridor Commercial Place Type include:

» Access from roadways to businesses and parking lots is coordinated and planned to minimize interruptions of traffic flow.

» Sidewalks are well-maintained and connect with adjacent neighborhoods.

» Where possible, walking paths, trails, and other designated routes offer additional pedestrian access.

» Bicycle parking and other improvements allow residents to bike to neighborhood commercial and connect these areas to designated routes within the community.
The Regional Commercial Place Type is located along or within close proximity to the busiest roadways in the community, which support a high volume of local and regional traffic. The Place Type includes major retailers, national chains, specialty retailers and service providers, and shopping centers that draw consumers from the entire community, the larger regional market, and to travelers moving through the community along I-35. They provide unique entertainment and shopping experiences, along with auto-oriented uses and amenities accessible to individuals traveling greater distances.

Compared to other commercial place types, Regional Commercial is high in intensity and features the largest scale of development.

LAND USE & ACTIVITY
Appropriate attributes of land use within the Regional Commercial Place Type include:

- National retailers and big-box stores provide access to a large variety of products in a single location.
- Restaurants, cafes, and bars, including franchise and drive-thru restaurants, offer a variety of food options.
- Entertainment uses, such as movie theaters and bowling alleys, provide entertainment and amusement.
- Hotels, motels, and other hospitality uses provide overnight lodging and short-term housing.
- Public and Semi-Public facilities, such as fire stations and religious institutions, provide necessary protection and public amenities.

URBAN FORM
Key attributes of the urban form within the Regional Commercial place type include:

- Taller 1-2 story structures with setbacks from streets.
- Well-defined public entrances oriented toward the street.
- Inviting, transparent storefronts with attractive, common entrances.
- Businesses are located in standalone, community centers, regional malls, power centers, and lifestyle centers.
Considerable building setbacks allow room for on-site parking and automobile access from roadways.

Parking is located off-street, in dedicated parking lots with perimeter screening, landscaped areas, pedestrian pathways, and other elements that break up extensive pavement and soften the views of parking areas.

Properties feature dedicated landscaping, signage, and other placemaking elements that improve beautify and establish an identity for these commercial areas.

Properties use green infrastructure to preserve existing natural resources and to reduce stormwater runoff.

Trees are planted and preserved to maintain shade and create a pedestrian-friendly area.

Regional Commercial areas are screened and/or buffered from adjacent residential neighborhoods with attractive fencing and/or landscaping.

Regional Commercial areas are screened and/or buffered from adjacent residential neighborhoods with attractive fencing and/or landscaping.

Properties feature dedicated landscaping, signage, and other placemaking elements that improve beautify and establish an identity for these commercial areas.

CONNECTIVITY

Key attributes of connectivity within the Regional Commercial Place Type include:

- Access from roadways to businesses and parking lots is coordinated and planned to minimize interruptions of traffic flow.
- Cross access between adjacent parking lots provides greater circulation reduces unnecessary cuts along major roadways.
- Sidewalks are well-maintained and connect with adjacent commercial areas and neighborhoods.
- Parking areas include sidewalks, designated routes, and other amenities to ensure pedestrian safety.

Traffic signals control turns, allow for safe pedestrian crossings, control speeds, and create gaps in flow.
The Downtown Mixed-Use Place Type is comprised of properties in Downtown Ardmore, which form the City’s core. The Place Type acts as a focal point of the community, which offers a variety of distinct uses within a lively activity center. Downtown is comprised of a mix of all other place types that coalesce together to create a unique place type. As the City’s most diverse, mixed-use area, Downtown balances numerous unique roles. This Place Type is the highest in intensity of development, with compact, high-density blocks and Ardmore’s tallest structures. The scale of development ranges greatly to support the various uses that contribute to making the Downtown an energetic destination.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate land uses within the Downtown Mixed-Use Place Type include:

- Restaurants, cafes, and bars provide a comfortable setting to eat and socialize.
- Commercial retail and service businesses, such as clothing stores, beauty salons, and book shops provide unique pedestrian oriented shopping.
- High-density residential apartments, frequently as a part of mixed-use buildings, provide housing options in a more urban setting.
- Hotels and other hospitality uses provide overnight lodging and short-term housing.
- Professional and medical offices, such as branch banks, pharmacies, dentist’s offices, or accounting firms provide more specialized services.
- Unique amenities, including performance venues such as Goddard Center for the Visual and Performing Arts, provide entertainment and space for a variety of activities.
- Public buildings and government offices, such as City Hall or the Carter County Court Division, provide governmental offices centrally located in the community.
- Parks provide social gathering spaces and additional recreation.
- Public transportation facilities, such as SORTS and Ardmore’s Amtrak Station, provide centrally located local and regional non-motorized transportation.
URBAN FORM
Key attributes of the urban form within the Downtown Mixed-Use Place Type include:

- Tall buildings, with ground floors oriented toward the street.
- Minimal or nonexistent front and side yard setbacks work together to create a consistent streetwall of storefronts and businesses.
- Mixed-use buildings include residential units, offices, or commercial spaces on the upper floors.
- Inviting, transparent storefronts with attractive common entrances.
- Parking located on-street, in off-street lots, and in parking structures located behind buildings.
- Surface parking lots are discouraged; however, when necessary they feature perimeter screening, landscaped areas, pedestrian pathways, and other elements that break up extensive pavement and soften the views of parking areas.
- Commercial and office structures on larger lots contain attractive, public plazas.
- Trees are planted and preserved to maintain shade and create a pedestrian-friendly area.
- Prominent industrial establishments within Downtown Ardmore, such as Bluebonnet Feeds, are landscaped and revamped to better fit into the urban character of Downtown Ardmore.
- Gateway and wayfinding signage, as well as other streetscaping improvements, use a specific Downtown brand which establishes a sense of place and identity for the area.

CONNECTIVITY
Key attributes of connectivity within the Downtown Mixed-Use Place Type include:

- All intersections, as well as key locations within Downtown, provide safe crossing points for pedestrians, including marked crosswalks, timed counters, pedestrian refuge islands, and other elements. Intersections in directly adjacent residential areas also support walkability with marked crosswalks, ramps, and signage.
- Mid-block crossings further calm traffic and create additional pedestrian access points.
- Main roadways are structured as two-way streets with on-street parallel parking.
- Where possible, off-street parking lots are accessed by side streets or alleys to maintain an attractive, safe, walkable streetscape for pedestrians to enjoy.
- On-street parking with varying hours allows visitors to access nearby businesses while discouraging overcrowding.
- Streetscaping, sidewalks, public plazas, benches, and other public amenities encourage walkability and foster social interaction at the neighborhood level.
- Main roadways are structured as two-way streets with on-street parallel parking.
- Where possible, off-street parking lots are accessed by side streets or alleys to maintain an attractive, safe, walkable streetscape for pedestrians to enjoy.
- On-street parking with varying hours allows visitors to access nearby businesses while discouraging overcrowding.
- Streetscape elements, including street signage has a thematic design.
- Wayfinding signage directs pedestrians and motorists to nearby destinations.
The Production & Employment Place Type includes a variety of light and heavy industrial uses. This Place Type represents Ardmore’s central employment centers, which include major industrial operations and manufacturing. The scale and intensity of industrial uses vary greatly, including local, regional, and national operations. This Place Type includes the greatest intensity within Ardmore and should be appropriately screened and buffered from adjacent incompatible uses. Careful management of land use and site design within these areas should support economic development while reducing their impacts on the community aesthetic and quality of life within Ardmore. The Production & Employment Place Type also includes the Ardmore Municipal Airport and adjacent properties.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Production & Employment Place Type include:

- Light to heavy manufacturing and mass production of specific types of goods.
- Warehouses, shipping, and logistics facilities provide for the storage, shipping, and coordination of materials and goods, including finished products from local manufacturing.
- Research and development, laboratories, and testing facilities.
- Home and corporate offices, including larger campuses.
- General offices, call centers, and storage facilities.

**URBAN FORM**

Key attributes of the urban form within the Production & Employment Center Place Type include:

- Low-rise office buildings.
- Manufacturing buildings with varying height, dictated primarily by function and industrial operations.
- Orientation of buildings supports industrial operations, with visitor and public entrances oriented toward the street.
- Dedicated and accessory structures located on collective campuses, as well as standalone buildings on smaller properties.
- Structures and industrial operations, including loading docks and bays, are buffered or screened from less intense uses, particularly residential place types and public spaces.
CONNECTIVITY

Key attributes of connectivity within the Production & Employment Center Place Type include:

» Automobile access provided to individual properties, including infrastructure to support the shipping and receiving of goods and materials.

» Access to sites and parking areas carefully managed to limit access, reduce non-local cut-through traffic, including designated truck routes to ensure shipping and receiving does not impact surrounding uses.

» Parking is provided on-site, primarily in screened and landscaped surface lots.

» Pedestrian connections are supported by on-site sidewalks and amenities included as part of site design.

» Where appropriate, sidewalks are well-maintained to provide connections to adjacent residential and commercial areas.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT
City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
The Community Open Space & Recreation Place Type is located throughout the community, in areas with abundant open space, serving as key destinations which provide residents with access to recreational opportunities. This also includes open spaces and areas set aside for preservation located outside Ardmore’s urbanized area. The place type includes land dedicated to the protection of natural areas and properties maintained to support recreation. These areas provide residents with opportunities to spend time being active in the outdoors. Larger parks and open space areas are included within this Place Type; however, smaller parks within residential and commercial areas are often included as part of those place types. This ensures that parks can be addressed and integrated within the fabric of adjacent areas.

**LAND USE & ACTIVITY**

Appropriate attributes of land use within the Community Open Space & Recreation Place Type include:

- Parks and recreational areas, which improve social wellbeing and public health.
- Areas are open spaces designated specifically for sports of various types such as football fields, baseball diamonds, and tennis courts, with some facilities lighted to extend facility use.
- Natural areas, forest preserves, and areas set aside for conservation provide opportunities for people to enjoy natural areas while maintaining the integrity of land.

**URBAN FORM**

Key attributes of connectivity within the Community Open Space & Recreation Place Type include:

- Smaller park spaces supported by pedestrian and bicycle access from adjacent residential areas.
- Automobile access includes on-street parking or small, dedicated parking lots.
- Larger parks spaces are supported primarily by automobile access in dedicated parking spaces.
- Pedestrian and bicycle access is provided by the local sidewalk network or through dedicated trails and pathways.
- Natural and open spaces either includes automobile and pedestrian access, or is restricted for conservation purposes.
The Community Services designation includes a variety of properties which provide amenities and services to residents, support City infrastructure, and improve the overall quality of life within Ardmore. Unlike the other 9 Land Use place types, community services are included as a standalone designation of land use on a specific parcel-by-parcel basis. This can include City utilities, medical campuses and clinics, local, state, and federal government buildings, and schools or universities located on distinct campuses. It should be noted that not all community service uses are included within the designation. Where appropriate, smaller, neighborhood-level facilities have been integrated with this designation.

The areas included within the Community Services designation should be addressed individually to ensure the unique characteristics of the properties are properly managed. As opportunities arise, improvements should be made to better integrate community services within the surrounding area, such through the installation of sidewalks, public plazas, and parks. Of the properties included within the Community Services designation, none are expected to see redevelopment or dramatic changes in land use. Should this occur, however, the City should work with property owners to transition land use in a manner that complements the surrounding Land Use place types and reflects the overall character of the community.
The purpose of the Housing Framework Plan is to provide recommendations related to increasing housing options in the Downtown, strengthening the City’s older neighborhoods, expanding affordable housing options, and accommodating new growth while avoiding sprawl. The Housing Framework Plan provides an overview of the challenges that Ardmore’s residential neighborhoods are currently experiencing, including blight and vacancy. Opportunities for stabilization and enhancement in specific neighborhoods are detailed in this section to guide the City in strengthening the quality and quantity of housing in its community.

**NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION & DESIGN**

The City of Ardmore is most notably characterized by single-family neighborhoods consisting primarily of traditional detached houses. Many of these neighborhoods consist of homes on at least 9,000 square lots with ample yard space. Several of the City’s neighborhoods have numerous vacant structures or lots interspersed between occupied homes. These characteristics create a level of separation among residences as well as between individuals and the community as a whole. Many neighborhoods, specifically to the north and east, are also experiencing high instances of blight.

The intensity of the degradation of certain areas is concerning to neighboring residences, as dilapidated houses are not only decreasing their own value, but also the values of the surrounding homes. Additionally, this creates an unattractive living environment for nearby residents, can foster crime, and decreases the community’s overall quality of life. Rectifying these issues of unsightliness and vacancy to reinvest in and revitalize the small town quality that describes Ardmore will require an openness to utilizing a variety of options and actions.

**IMPROVE NEIGHBORHOOD AESTHETICS**

Blighted houses are a major concern in many of Ardmore’s neighborhoods. They are an eyesore to the neighbors and an economic drain on the City. Fortunately, there are a number of options for addressing this issue. A discussion of these options is included below.

**REMOVAL OF BLIGHT**

According to staff, the City budgets $30,000 annually for the demolition of dilapidated housing. With a demolition cost of approximately $5,000 per home, the City is only able to demolish about six homes a year. At this rate, it will take over 15 years to take down the 140 plus houses that have been identified for removal. City officials should work to increase the available funding for demolitions, which will allow for quicker community revitalization.

If provided an incentive, developers are more likely to purchase lots on derelict homes adjacent to developable properties. There are a number of possible incentives the City could offer, such as increasing property tax abatements or extending the length of property tax abatements. Incentives such as these would not only encourage a developer to take responsibility of the blighted property, but may also encourage developers to design a more creative development project than was initially planned.

**REHABILITATION OF EXISTING HOUSING**

Where possible, the City should prioritize the rehabilitation of vacant housing rather than demolishing it. There are many benefits to rehabilitation, the greatest of which is that it reduces the amount of vacant land in the neighborhood while demonstrating the City’s commitment to facilitating neighborhood improvements. Renovating viable structures could capture up to 50 percent of the projected house hold growth for Ardmore, saving the City money in subsidies and tax breaks while reducing housing vacancy.
Potential incentive programs may include but not be limited to:

- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC).** LIHTC are subsidies used for the creation of affordable housing units. A developer could receive either a four or nine percent credit to cover the costs for renovating a home. This credit helps to increase the housing stock of livable homes in neighborhoods. In addition, it provides affordable options for low-income families and helps them to access better neighborhoods.

- **Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits (HTC).** HTC are subsidies used for the preservation of historically significant buildings and/or neighborhoods. A developer could receive up to a 40 percent tax credit—20 percent each for federal and state tax liabilities—for the rehabilitation and maintenance of a historic property. Qualifying housing could be saved and properties of significance preserved.

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL**

One way to assist with the revitalization of Downtown is to increase the number of people living in the area. Multifamily residential, either above-ground floor retail or restaurants, in standalone repurposed buildings, or as infill development on formerly vacant land, are all viable options. Adding multifamily units would greatly increase the density and walkability of Downtown Ardmore, and contribute to a greater sense of vitality and safety. Increasing Downtown residents also adds economic value through added property taxes and increased commercial sales.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**REVitalize Residential Neighborhoods**

Blighted, vacant structures are not only an eyesore to the community, they contribute to increased disinvestment in neighborhoods. To reduce blight and prevent further disinvestment, the City should increase its code enforcement and provide incentives to assist property owners in maintaining their homes. Additionally, the City should encourage the renovation of vacant houses when possible and provide assistance and support for demolishing structures that are beyond saving. The City should partner with local organizations to develop a resource pool for renovating and demolishing vacant, blighted structures.

To further address blight and neighborhood stabilization in Ardmore, the City should also facilitate the creation of neighborhood stabilization task forces and work with those areas that are most in need of support. Task forces can monitor vacant properties to reduce crime, assist with housing maintenance, maintain vacant lots, and host fundraising events for rehabilitating vacant houses in their neighborhoods. These forces can also keep the City updated on incidences of crime in their neighborhoods.

**CONSIDER URBAN FARMING & COMMUNITY GARDENING**

Urban farming and community gardening is an excellent way to bring neighborhoods together and eliminate blight. The City should amend its zoning ordinance to allow for and encourage urban farming in residential neighborhoods. Recognizing that this is a sensitive issue that community’s nationwide are struggling with, establishing guidelines for chicken coops (e.g., requiring sound-proof design guidelines for coops and prohibiting roosters) and beekeeping (e.g., flow-framing) will allow for interested community members to become involved in the local food movement, efficiently utilize vacant space, and provide valuable educational opportunities, while ensuring the prevention of unwanted noise. Additionally, utilizing vacant space for urban farms and community gardens provides opportunities for community members to get to know each other and strengthen their neighborhoods.

**INCREASE RESIDENTIAL DENSITY**

Currently the UDC does not allow for mixed-use development or various affordable housing options, both of which the community desires. For example, the community would like to see the development of dense housing, tiny houses, and secondary suite housing above garages, but the UDC currently does not allow these uses. This housing not only provides more affordable, attractive, low-maintenance housing options, but also provides more housing options for aging in place. In addition, the City should establish guidelines for Downtown residential housing to increase density and contribute to a more walkable Downtown.

**EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT**

Ports of the east, west, and north parts of the City’s urbanized foot print comprise a large supply of open land that many consider to be prime real estate. Due to the fact that this land lacks the required infrastructure to support any type of immediate development, and is located far from most city services and amenities, development can be costly and inefficient for the City, as well as unaffordable to many residents. Instead of supporting this type of development, the City should utilize its vacant lots for infill development. This will benefit the City by increasing density and utilizing vacant land, some of which could be saved as open space or developed as park land. The City should incentivize developers to construct projects in established neighborhoods, specifically Downtown.

To further address blight and neighborhood stabilization in Ardmore, the City should also facilitate the creation of neighborhood stabilization task forces and work with those areas that are most in need of support. Task forces can monitor vacant properties to reduce crime, assist with housing maintenance, maintain vacant lots, and host fundraising events for rehabilitating vacant houses in their neighborhoods. These forces can also keep the City updated on incidences of crime in their neighborhoods.

**DOWNTOWN RESIDENTIAL**

One way to assist with the revitalization of Downtown is to increase the number of people living in the area. Multifamily residential, either above-ground floor retail or restaurants, in standalone repurposed buildings, or as infill development on formerly vacant land, are all viable options. Adding multifamily units would greatly increase the density and walkability of Downtown Ardmore, and contribute to a greater sense of vitality and safety. Increasing Downtown residents also adds economic value through added property taxes and increased commercial sales.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**REVitalize Residential Neighborhoods**

Blighted, vacant structures are not only an eyesore to the community, they contribute to increased disinvestment in neighborhoods. To reduce blight and prevent further disinvestment, the City should increase its code enforcement and provide incentives to assist property owners in maintaining their homes. Additionally, the City should encourage the renovation of vacant houses when possible and provide assistance and support for demolishing structures that are beyond saving. The City should partner with local organizations to develop a resource pool for renovating and demolishing vacant, blighted structures.

To further address blight and neighborhood stabilization in Ardmore, the City should also facilitate the creation of neighborhood stabilization task forces and work with those areas that are most in need of support. Task forces can monitor vacant properties to reduce crime, assist with housing maintenance, maintain vacant lots, and host fundraising events for rehabilitating vacant houses in their neighborhoods. These forces can also keep the City updated on incidences of crime in their neighborhoods.
POTENTIAL GROWTH

By 2020, Ardmore’s population is projected to grow by six percent (6%) and its number of households is projected to grow by five-and-a-half percent (5.5%). This growth will require appropriate housing in the coming years. With a vacancy rate of 11 percent, the City has a surplus of housing units, particularly a significant number of housing units, particularly single-family homes, are neglected and set for demolition. Vacant lots number 275 acres in Downtown. Land in this area can serve as potential investments for developers due to their location in the core, proximity to amenities and services, and access to infrastructure. Developing in these areas benefits the City by increasing density and utilizing vacant land, some of which could be saved as open space or developed as parkland. Developers should be incentivized to develop projects in established neighborhoods, specifically Downtown. Likewise, they should also be required to do so in order to prevent any more leapfrog development from happening around the edges of Ardmore. The City should create clear boundaries to guide future development and (re)invest into existing neighborhoods and preserve agricultural and open space at the fringes areas. The City has the option to take the policy one step further and require that infill development occur in certain neighborhoods.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Infill development can occur on vacant lots in between and around developed properties, capitalizing on the neighborhood’s existing density, infrastructure, and proximity. Infill development on vacant lots is crucial to the strengthening of neighborhoods, as vacant lots are often a waste of practical land as well as a drain on individual property owners and the City. Providing infrastructure, including road, sewer, water, utilities, as well as police and fire protection, can be costly and potentially detract from investment in already established built areas.

PREVENT OUTWARD GROWTH

At this time, pushing the development boundary on the edges of the Ardmore area are costly and unnecessary. The edge of the City, particularly to the east and west, contain large amount of open land, which is considered to be suitable and desirable for development. Unfortunately, this land lacks the required infrastructure to support any type of development and exists far away from most services such as grocery stores, retail shopping, and restaurants. Sprawling development is costly for all parties involved. Not only does it force the City to expand the reach of its infrastructure and services like fire protection, the developer generally has to cover part or all of the cost. In addition, the costs of sprawling development are usually covered by residents of Ardmore through higher rents or increased taxes. A multitude of empty lots and vacant units already exists within the city boundary, particularly the 275 vacant acres in Downtown. Land in this area can serve as potential investments for developers due to their location in the core, proximity to amenities and services, and access to infrastructure. Developing in these areas benefits the City by increasing density and utilizing vacant land, some of which could be saved as open space or developed as parkland. Developers should be incentivized to develop projects in established neighborhoods, specifically Downtown. Likewise, they should also be required to do so in order to prevent any more leapfrog development from happening around the edges of Ardmore. The City should create clear boundaries to guide future development and (re)invest into existing neighborhoods and preserve agricultural and open space at the fringes areas. The City has the option to take the policy one step further and require that infill development occur in certain neighborhoods.

CONSIDER OTHER HOUSING TYPES

Both home values and median income levels are on the rise in Ardmore, but they are still lower than the metropolitan area as a whole. By 2020, the City is expected to add more than 600 housing units. The modest increase in home values and median incomes, coupled with decreasing employment, could suggest the need for more rental housing in Ardmore. The following provides a brief overview of potential housing options for the City to consider advocating for:

» Multifamily Apartments. This type of housing is the traditional choice for rental housing. Since this type of housing accounts for only nine percent of the City’s existing housing stock, multifamily apartments pose a viable option for additional rental units.

» Tiny Houses & Secondary Suites. Sometimes referred to as “granny flats,” this type of housing has very low construction and upkeep costs given to their compact size. Units like these could be grouped together on the same parcel or even shared on a parcel with an existing traditional single-family home. The latter are beneficial for aging family members that need living assistance but still desire independence. To allow for these types of housing developments, on their own and on shared parcels, the City will have to amend the UDC, particularly in single-family detached neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Utilize Regulatory Controls

The City should establish requirements in the UDC to prevent leapfrog development from happening around the edges of Ardmore. Additionally, the City should create a concurrency requirement that necessitates any new development to occur within the City’s boundaries where sufficient infrastructure already exists. The City has the option to take the policy one step further and require that infill development occur in certain neighborhoods.

Establish Tiers of Growth Areas

In order to efficiently provide municipal services and infrastructure and maintain a high quality-of-life for Ardmore’s residents, the City needs to establish multiple tiers of growth areas. Growth “zones” would establish clear boundaries to guide future development and (re)invest into existing neighborhoods and preserve agricultural and open space at the fringes areas. For description for each tier of growth areas, please refer to the map on the right.
URBAN GROWTH AREAS

Place Types
- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Fringe Residential
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Downtown Mixed-Use

Urban Growth Boundaries

Tier 1. The Tier 1 would surround the areas designated as the Downtown Mixed-Use (see page 60) and Traditional Neighborhood Place Types (see page 52), as they are considered the core areas of the City. The City should prioritize future infill development and redevelopment within the Tier 1 Growth Area. Doing so contributes to the stability, maintenance, and reinvestment that traditional neighborhoods need.

Tier 2. Assuming the City has successfully developed its vacant lots and redeveloped its dilapidated homes within the Tier 1 Growth Area, the City should focus future infill development and redevelopment in areas designated as the Fringe Residential Place Type (see page 50). Within the Tier 2 area, the City should ensure that future developments are clustered, adhering to the principles of conservation design to better preserve the existing natural resources surrounding the City.

Tier 3. The Tier 3 Growth Area is defined by the City’s municipal boundary. Development should occur only if areas within the Tier 1 and Tier 2 Growth Area are substantially built-out. Under this scenario, it is anticipated that the City has experienced significant changes to its demographics, economy, transportation network, and natural environment. Growth pressure in Tier 3 would be a good indicator for the City to update its Comprehensive Plan.
According to a statewide population projection report done by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce in 2012, the 2040 population projection for Carter County is 53,990. Based on data from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, the population for the City of Ardmore has been roughly 50 percent of the County’s total population. Using this information, the 2040 population for Ardmore is projected at 26,995. This is an increase of 2,454 people from the 2015 population. This correlates to an increase of 955 total households over the same time period. Integra Realty Resources prepared a Housing Needs Assessment for Carter County, OK using U.S. Census and Nielsen Site Reports data in 2015. Integra projects a 2020 total population of 25,869, which is an increase of 786 people from 2015. This correlates to an increase of 308 total households. Based on findings contained in the afore-mentioned studies, rental rates in Ardmore increased in the previous decade along with occupancy rates, even for lower-quality units. Rental units in the City, both affordable and market-rate, report 95% occupancy levels. This suggests there is a demand for new multifamily apartments to accommodate additional rental demand. There is currently a limited number of multifamily units in Ardmore. Only 184 units have been built from 2004-2014, most of which are categorized as affordable housing. For comparison, 787 single-family units were built during that same time. The present shortage of multifamily housing options and the projected population growth suggests the need for an increase in multifamily housing developments, particularly located near high-employment areas. The City has a much higher percentage of rental product in comparison to the MSA and roughly the same percentage of single-family detached units relative to total housing stock. This translates to a large number of single-family homes that are not owner-occupied.

**HOUSING NEED**
The City of Ardmore currently has 11,227 total housing units, with an 11.5 percent vacancy rate or just under 1,300 total vacant units. Applying this number to projected housing demand, existing vacancy could accommodate the projected increase in households using either of the two forecasts by more than 300 units. While this figure is based on numbers only and does not factor in the condition of vacant units, it does underscore the potential for infill development to accommodate future growth. In addition, it is estimated that much of the demand will be for multi-family units. This further reconciles with the defined lack of this product in the market. From a development and land use perspective, it translates to less pressure and need to build into growth areas in the near to mid-term given this higher density development.

Future employment opportunities and growth has a direct relationship to housing demand and supply. There are several companies in Ardmore that employ a large portion of the population including Michelin, Mercy Hospitals, Dollar General, and Walmart. While the City has lost some of its share of regional employment over the past decade, potential for industry and employment growth exists within the Ardmore Airpark given the site’s tremendous room for expansion. The highly desirable and marketable location which contains direct rail access and one of the longest airport runways in the region, has over 1,000 acres of developable and fully serviced land available. Future business attraction and expansion would result in new workers seeking housing in Ardmore providing that the right product is available. The symbiotic relationship between business growth and housing exists in that the availability of housing stock for employees may be a contributing factor in a company’s relocation and expansion plans.

Overall the City of Ardmore has an adequate supply of for sale units for all value ranges except for the highest value of homes. Homes with values ranging from $125,000 or more are experiencing a significant demand from households with incomes that can afford homes within that price range. For example, a household that earns between $75,000 and $99,999 annually can afford a home valued between $225,000 and $299,999. Ardmore currently has 790 households earning incomes within that range but only 306 homes within that value. Thus roughly 58 percent of these households do not have access to a home they can comfortably afford. This may adequately fulfill the housing and lifestyle needs for some, others may decide to leave the community for move up housing. A larger issue, from an economic development perspective, is whether a business may choose not to locate to Ardmore because of the lack of housing product available for senior level or higher earning employees.

While the distribution of housing product between price points is relatively the same, the City of Ardmore is more affordable than the Micropolitan Area.
Renter-occupied housing is also experiencing a demand for higher-value (higher-income) units, but more importantly there is significant demand for the most affordable units. Demand exceeds supply for units with rents of less than $499 per month, especially in the lowest range of less than $124 per month. Households earning less than $5,000 a year can afford a rental unit in that range without experiencing a housing cost burden. Currently the City has approximately 170 households earning incomes within that range, but fewer than 20 units affordable to those households. Nearly 90 percent of these households do not have access to housing that they can comfortably afford, and unlike the owner-occupied households, there are no lower-cost units for them to fall back on.

The absence or undersupply of housing product exists in two ends of the spectrum; Higher end for-sale units and lower income and affordable rental product. The City has a need for new multi-family and attached single-family housing in general and Downtown specifically. Encouraging the development of new units within close proximity to centers of employment and commercial activity such as the Downtown is important. This enables easier access to jobs and shopping and creates more population density to support nearby businesses.

Ardmore is a good price option for both rental and owner-occupied housing. The median rent for apartments in the City is $644, which is 8% less than the median rental price in the state of Oklahoma. The same is true for owner-occupied housing, with a median home value of $95,700 which is 15% less than state overall. Of the new projected households coming to Ardmore, roughly 58 percent are estimated to be eligible for Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines this eligibility as a household earning less than 60 percent of area median income by household size. Similarly, from 2011-2015 an average of 46 percent of renter households in Ardmore spent 30 percent or more of their annual income on housing and thus are experiencing a housing-cost burden. From 2006-2010 the average was 38.5 percent, indicating that the number of burdened households is steadily increasing.
Currently employment is in a state of flux because levels are not trending consecutively in either direction (increasing or decreasing). Since 2009 it has alternated from increasing to decreasing every year. Healthcare and Services, the industry with either the largest or second-largest employment depending on the year, has followed this trend and has even been the leader in employment losses in certain years. Manufacturing, the other largest industry has followed the inverse trend. Inflow and outflow of employment has also followed this trend, with the city experiencing either a significant increase in individuals working in Ardmore or a significant decrease. Currently approximately two-thirds of the Ardmore workforce lives outside of the City. Stabilizing the workforce and increasing the number of workers that both live and work in the city would also serve to stabilize and improve housing and neighborhoods.

RESIDENTIAL POLICY DECISIONS

Projected population and household growth in Ardmore through 2040 can be largely accommodated within the existing City boundaries. The combination of underutilized and vacant properties accompanied with the need for additional multi-family product, places a higher priority and greater potential on infill development. From a fiscal perspective, prioritizing development and investment in existing sites and neighborhoods, creates less strain on city services and infrastructure. It serves to stabilize neighborhoods, particularly those that are negatively impacted by absentee landlords and deferred maintenance of single-family rental. The ability to provide a mix of market rate and affordable multi-family units near downtown is an additional benefit that both meets a housing need and increases the vitality of the area. Further this product would serve to accommodate Ardmore’s aging population as well as young professionals.

While the existing city boundaries should be the primary focus of multi-family and attached single-family (townhomes and duplex units) and smaller lot detached single-family development can still occur within the defined growth areas. As indicated earlier, there is an absence of and indications of demand for, higher end single family units. These are units that cater to individuals moving up from mid-tier housing or higher income households locating to the market. This type of larger lot development may be well suited for undeveloped areas.

Ultimately, decisions related to the extension of infrastructure to accommodate development in growth areas or prioritizing investment in urban infill areas, will be policy decisions over the next several years. City leaders should, however, thoroughly evaluate all residential development/redevelopment plans based on the long-term impact on Ardmore as a whole.
COMMERCIAL AREAS
Commercial areas in Ardmore are primarily concentrated along major corridors, tending to be auto-centric, and are relatively healthy, with minimal vacancy. Newer commercial development has been sited along the I-35 corridor, much of it with a regional focus (e.g., auto dealerships, big-box developments have excessive parking, presenting an opportunity for more areas to be dedicated to on-site landscaping. What follows is a more detailed discussion of opportunities for improvement in Ardmore’s commercial areas, followed by specific, actionable recommendations.

ACCESS MANAGEMENT
The majority of commercial and office developments throughout Ardmore’s commercial areas have their own access points, which have resulted in an abundance of curb cuts, little connectivity between businesses, and challenging parking patterns. This condition can limit mobility and increase potential traffic conflicts. To remedy this, the City should encourage cross-access between adjacent parking lots, relocate entrances to side streets and alleys, and reduce unnecessary and redundant curb cuts in the City’s commercial areas.

SIDEWALK CONNECTIVITY
As important places in Ardmore, the commercial areas should accommodate all modes of transportation. Recognizing that both 12th Avenue and Rockford Road are corridors where primary users are travelling by vehicle, they should not neglect the pedestrian. Pedestrian connectivity and comfort is also paramount in Downtown, and pedestrian mobility should warrant equal, if not greater, consideration than vehicles. Throughout Ardmore’s commercial areas, there are gaps and missed connections in the sidewalk network, limiting mobility and compromising safety. Even in some instances where sidewalks are present, they are cracked, bumpy, and in poor condition. The City should prioritize sidewalk connectivity in its commercial areas, working with property owners to identify and address gaps in the pedestrian network. Where adequate right-of-way exists, sidewalks should be separated from the street with a landscaped parkway.

ON-SITE PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS
A number of properties in Ardmore’s commercial areas lack on-site pedestrian connections to link the public sidewalk to building entries, or adjacent businesses to each other. The City should work with property owners, promoting the benefits of connectivity, and work to install on-site pedestrian connections that clearly delineate a defined path to building entrances.

BICYCLE & TRAIL NETWORK IMPROVEMENTS
The City has only partially implemented the infrastructure recommendations of the 1997 Ardmore Trails Master Plan, and significant gaps within the network are present. Most bicycle infrastructure exists in the fringe areas of the City’s urbanized footprint, such as the areas near Myall Road, Regional Park, and Broadbown Park. It is recommended that the City revise its 1997 Ardmore Trails Master Plan, updating and prioritizing recommendations for additional improvements that reflect current conditions and the aspirations of the community.
SITE SCREENING & BUFFERING

Much of the City’s commercial areas lack sufficient site screening or buffering that would protect adjacent residential neighborhoods as well as improve their appearance and overall community character. The City should amend its UDC to expand buffering and screening standards, including sufficient screening of utility boxes. This should account for lot depth, parking requirements, site design, and the development’s ability to integrate fencing, berming, and native and perennial plantings. When a property abuts a public street, the improvement of required parking lot landscaping, including within (islands) and around (perimeter) parking lots.

PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

Inadequate landscaping requirements and large parking areas have left several commercial developments with a shortage of green space and harsh appearance. Current parking requirements for retail is a minimum of one (1) space per 200 square feet. The City should amend its UDC, reevaluating its parking requirements to one (1) space per 250 square feet. The City should also consider establishing parking maximums to prevent parking from being over built. Additionally, the City should increase the amount of required parking lot landscaping, including within islands and around (perimeter) parking lots.

DISTRICT GATEWAYS

The three subareas, discussed in more detail below, are prominent and visible destinations in the City. They are centers of activity that host opportunities for shopping, dining, and employment for the community and the larger region. In many respects they are the “welcome mat” for Ardmore, playing a critical role in shaping perceptions of the community by visitors and building pride in its residents. Working with property owners, and ODOT where necessary, the City should enhance the subareas, as well as other important commercial areas, with gateway features, helping to delineate these critical areas from other parts of the community, while welcoming visitors to the City of Ardmore.

OVERHEAD UTILITY LINES

Overhead utility lines are present throughout some prominent and visible locations within the City’s commercial areas. In some places they are out of view, located at the rear of properties. However, in many instances, utilities are located in the front yard, parking lot, or right-of-way. The City’s UDC already prohibits new development from erecting overhead utility lines, but they exist within existing developed areas. The appearance of the overhead utility lines detracts from the character and appearance of commercial areas, and in some instances may be problematic to redevelopment. The City should work with utility companies and property owners/developers to bury or relocate overhead utilities as site and roadway improvements occur.

UTILITY & DUMPSTER SCREENING

Dumpsters and utility boxes are unsightly but necessary components of development. Although most are located in the rear of properties, they should still be screened and enclosed. Although the City has screening and enclosure requirements, there are numerous instances throughout the City’s commercial areas where there are no enclosures, and litter and garbage has spread. Enforcing existing regulations within the subareas would help ensure that these unsightly elements do not adversely impact the character of Downtown and Ardmore’s other key commercial areas.

REDUCED PARKING

Many commercial areas have underused parking lots. This is problematic in that it creates dead space that serves as a deterrent to customers as well as an opportunity for crime. To remedy this issue, the City should eliminate vacant parking lots and reduce the size of underused parking lots to make room for additional real estate and landscaping. Large, open parking lots contribute to an uncomfortable environment for pedestrians, as well as an unattractive environment for residents and visitors traveling by vehicle. To create a more welcoming, attractive environment for pedestrians and drivers alike, the City should amend its UDC to require the installation of vegetative buffering in and around parking lots. This would also serve as green infrastructure by reducing runoff and flooding from stormwater.

FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

Many business facades are either deteriorating or covered with metal siding or wood shingles. Façade improvements would greatly enhance the overall appearance of these businesses, creating an attractive destination for residents and visitors alike. To obtain additional information and funding for restoring and improving buildings in the Downtown, the City should coordinate with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the Oklahoma Main Street Center (OMSC).

COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL AREAS FRAMEWORK
City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
RECOMMENDATIONS

» Work with property owners and developers to develop cross-access between adjacent commercial sites to promote internal circulation. This would reduce the need for additional curb cuts, which creates more traffic conflict points, and improves transportation safety.

» Amend the UDC to require direct pedestrian connections from the public right-of-way to the commercial development’s primary entrance. The City should also proactively enforce this requirement when reviewing applicable commercial developments.

» Encourage the development of regional commercial uses around the southern interchange at US-70 and I-35.

» Ensure the area along US-70 between I-35 and Commerce Street, in addition to the area surrounding Merrick Drive, has adequate infrastructure to support future regional-based commercial development. The City should work with ODOT, and property owners and developers of these areas to establish a cohesive cross-access network between these developments to improve access and safety. In addition to having sufficient on-site landscaping and screening to ensure the developments are visually appealing.

» The City should coordinate with the Chickasaw Nation and ODOT to ensure the future resort and casino development do not adversely impact traffic safety and access along US-70.

» Identify commercial sites that have excessive parking capacity and work with property owners of these sites to explore the possibility of converting excess parking space into landscaping and infill developments.

» Accommodate pedestrians by adding sidewalks and human-scale urban design elements to commercial areas.

» The City should market the City’s Commercial and Residential Sidewalk Replacement Program to property owners with sidewalks in poor conditions. Under these programs, the City provides financial assistance to property owners to remove and replace sidewalks through rebating a flat fee of $3.75 per square foot of qualifying sidewalks.

» Work with property owners and ODOT to fill in sidewalk gaps and ensure sidewalks connected to crosswalks at intersections are linked by ADA-compliant ramps.

» Encourage businesses to accommodate cyclists by installing bicycle racks at their storefronts.

» Either lower the parking minimum requirements or utilize parking maximums in the City’s UDC to prevent future commercial development from having excessive parking capacity.

» The City should also ensure the UDC’s landscaping requirements would result in parking lots of future developments having sufficient perimeter and on-site landscaping, such as parking islands.

» Work with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce and the OMSC to increase funding for façade improvements in the Downtown.
Commercial areas framework plan

Commercial land uses should contain a mix of businesses providing a diverse range of goods and services to Ardmore residents, visitors from elsewhere, and motorists traversing across the City. The Land Use Plan designates four types of commercial place types in the City. They are: Neighborhood Commercial, Corridor Commercial, Regional Commercial, and Downtown Mixed-Use. This plan builds on the Land Use Plan’s commercial place types, providing more specific goals and recommendations for each commercial area. The recommendations for Downtown Ardmore, 15th Avenue NW, and Rockford Road are further supplemented by their own subareas plan later in this section.

12th Avenue NW. Access to the interstate and large tracts of land make this area a regional commercial center. As a regional destination, the appearance of development along the corridor plays an important role in shaping the image and identity of Ardmore.

Holiday Drive. The Holiday Drive corridor is home to a growing number of standalone commercial establishments, such as coffee shops, auto dealerships, and hotels. The corridor’s open space allows for a variety of development types.

Rockford Road. As a key north-south route through the western part of the City, with the Rockford Road Bridge as an important gateway, the corridor developments should utilize on-site green infrastructure to better preserve the existing natural resources.

I-35 & US-70 interchange. This major area enjoys qualifications to serve as a regional commercial hub and is ideal for big box and office types of infrastructure and large-scale commercial development.

Western Broadway Street. This corridor should provide a variety of commercial services and initial development. Near the I-35 interchange, lodging and other highway commercial uses are appropriate.

Future Chickasaw Nation Resort & Casino. The Chickasaw Nation has plans to develop a resort and casino development on the future Chickasaw Nation Casino. As a result, the development in this area should complement the Chickasaw Nation’s resort and casino development.

Commercial Street. Commercial uses along Commercial Street should consist of an inviting, walkable pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development that should include retail, restaurants, entertainment, and offices on the ground floors as a component of mixed-use buildings.

Downtown Ardmore. The City should continue its efforts to make Downtown Ardmore a vibrant hub of entertainment, work, and neighborhood. Downtown Ardmore should consist of an inviting, walkable pedestrian-oriented mixed-use development that should include retail, restaurants, entertainment, and offices on the ground floors as a component of mixed-use buildings.

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes. Guided through the community are well-established, smaller commercial nodes. These areas should continue to provide close-to-home shopping for nearby residents.
Ardmore’s mix of industries serves to diversify the economy and prevent an overreliance on a single industry or employer. At the same time, Ardmore’s strategic location along I-35 between Dallas and Oklahoma City, with access to rail and two airports, will continue to make it an attractive location for heavy industry, transportation, distribution, logistics, and other similar business types. But as the micropolitan region’s economy has expanded in terms of total employment, the City of Ardmore has not seen the same level of employment growth. It is critical that Ardmore position itself to remain a competitive destination for investment in south central Oklahoma.

Ardmore’s industrial base has several significant assets, including its strategic location to rail and air infrastructure, that can be leveraged for further industrial growth. The City has a large supply of available industrial land, with more than 1,600 undeveloped acres available in four existing business parks. This acreage can be leveraged for further industrial growth in the future. Further, the City has a diverse mix of industries in its residential areas, that can be leveraged for further residential growth.

In the following discussion, key opportunities related to growth and development in Ardmore’s industrial areas are summarized, and specific recommendations for these important areas are detailed.

**Industrial Areas**

Ardmore has a variety of incentives and tools that can be used to recruit and retain businesses; however, during interviews, there were some business leaders that expressed concern that these tools are on “the chopping block” due to budget cuts and could affect new business growth. If this occurs, it is critical that Ardmore continue to explore other strategies and mechanisms to compete within the wider marketplace. Given Ardmore’s proximity to the state border, the City often competes with Texas for the location of industry and employment. Different policies and laws between each state affect the attractiveness of locating in Texas versus Oklahoma. While comparatively lower property taxes attract businesses to Oklahoma, the lack of state income tax is leveraged on the Texas side.

**Strategic Assets**

Ardmore’s diverse mix of industrial uses greatly contribute to its competitive advantage in the marketplace and its solid track record of economic success. Its industrial market is influenced by several factors, including its strategic location along I-35 between major metropolitan areas, two airports, local energy production, rail access, and membership within the Oklahoma Biotechnology Corridor (with the assistance of the Noble Foundation). New investment in the Ardmore Industrial Airpark has boosted Ardmore’s competitiveness by allowing safe and direct air cargo, and private commuter flights. These strategic assets should be leveraged for their influence on Ardmore’s solid market position and role in leading to additional industrial growth.

**Screening & Buffering**

Industrial sites can be undesirable activities to live near. To minimize the negative impacts of industrial areas on nearby and adjacent non-industrial areas, buffering and screening should be promoted and incorporated into the design of these sites. Vegetative buffering should use deep-rooted, native, perennial plants to not only serve as attractive low-maintenance buffers, but to also serve as green infrastructure by minimizing flooding and run-off from stormwater. This is particularly important in Downtown Ardmore in the areas deeply embedded in the City’s residential areas, as the appearance and noise from industrial areas is detrimental to the atmosphere of the Downtown and its surrounding neighborhoods.

**Regulatory Tools**

Oklahoma has a variety of incentives and tools that can be used to recruit and retain businesses, however, during interviews, there were some business leaders that expressed concern that these tools are on “the chopping block” due to budget cuts and could affect new business growth. If this occurs, it is critical that Ardmore continue to explore other strategies and mechanisms to compete within the wider marketplace. Given Ardmore’s proximity to the state border, the City often competes with Texas for the location of industry and employment. Different policies and laws between each state affect the attractiveness of locating in Texas versus Oklahoma. While comparatively lower property taxes attract businesses to Oklahoma, the lack of state income tax is leveraged on the Texas side.

**Recommendations**

- Coordinate with the Ardmore Development Authority to identify additional incentives that can be used to attract a greater number of industries establishing in the City of Ardmore.
- Work with property owners and developers to identify industrial buildings that can be adaptively reused for commercial or residential purposes.
- Amend the UDC to require screening and buffering around industrial buildings and associated parking when adjacent to existing or planned non-industrial uses or busy arterial streets.
- Effectively enforce the UDC’s regulations and work with developers and property owners to ensure industrial sites are cognizant of their surrounding land uses to mitigate any potential land use conflicts.
- Work with developers and property owners of industrial sites to promote safe transport of goods and services along the City’s roadways.
- Coordinate with the Sam Noble Foundation and the Southern Oklahoma Technology Center to explore opportunities for new industrial establishments or ventures related to scientific research.
- Ensure sufficient levels of service of infrastructure, such as roads and water lines, are provided in all industrial areas to stimulate growth.
INDUSTRIAL AREAS FRAMEWORK PLAN

The City of Ardmore’s Land Use Plan identifies a considerable amount of land dedicated to industrial uses. Industrial uses, such as industrial parks and heavy industries, are essential to the City’s economy. They help provide a strong tax base and perhaps more importantly, provide jobs in the community. The Land Use Plan’s Production & Employment place type is the City’s only designation for industrial uses. This plan builds on the Production & Employment place type, providing more specific goals and recommendations for each of the City’s industrial areas.

1. Ardmore Industrial Airpark. The Ardmore Industrial Airpark should capitalize on its proximity to the Ardmore Municipal Airport, providing opportunities for smaller light-industrial uses.
2. Moore Industrial Area. This area provides opportunities for smaller light-industrial uses. Buffering and screening are important considerations for uses in this area.
3. New Horizons Industrial Park. This small industrial area enjoys access and visibility from I-35. Despite its close proximity to the Westport Industrial Park, this area is well-established and has potential for residential subdivisions and the Moore Industrial Area.
4. Future industrial developments in this area are an ideal location for heavy industries, such as the Michelin Tire Plant factory, this Buy Distribution Center and the Westport Industrial Park.
5. Veterans Way Industrial Area. Industrial uses in this area should capitalize on its proximity to Veterans Way/State Routes 146 and 299.
6. Ardmore Industrial Airpark. The Ardmore Industrial Airpark should capitalize on its isolation from other smaller light-industrial uses.
7. Veterans Way Industrial Area. This area provides opportunities for smaller light-industrial uses.
8. Moore Industrial Area. This area provides opportunities for smaller light-industrial uses. Buffering and screening are important considerations for uses in this area.
9. New Horizons Industrial Park. This small industrial area enjoys access and visibility from I-35. Despite its close proximity to the Westport Industrial Park, this area is well-established and has potential for residential subdivisions and the Moore Industrial Area.
10. Future industrial developments in this area are an ideal location for heavy industries, such as the Michelin Tire Plant factory, this Buy Distribution Center and the Westport Industrial Park.
11. Veterans Way Industrial Area. Industrial uses in this area should capitalize on its proximity to Veterans Way/State Routes 146 and 299.
Downtown Ardmore, 12th Avenue, and Rockford Road are the main economic drivers of the community. These corridors serve as the main attraction for residents and visitors to explore and socialize. Additionally, within these corridors exists the opportunities for infill development of businesses and housing. Maintaining the vibrancy of Ardmore’s economic drivers is crucial to attracting and maintaining businesses, customers, and visitors to the City. In addition, these areas greatly contribute to the City’s image and identity. The following goals, objectives, and recommendations describe how the City can invest in and enhance the vibrancy of Downtown Ardmore, 12th Avenue, and Rockford Road, to create main attractions for businesses, residents, and visitors for years to come.

Building on the core components of the Comprehensive Plan, the following subarea plans highlight key concepts and strategies for land use and development, transportation and circulation, and other improvements to these important areas of Ardmore.

The purpose of the Subarea Plans is to:

1. Identify key characteristics of each subarea
2. Provide recommendations for strengthening each subarea

SUBAREA PLANS
Downtown Ardmore represents the heart of the City. It is an employment, entertainment, and cultural hub of the City. The presence of Amtrak Station and major east-west and north-south thoroughways makes Downtown Ardmore accessible to residents and visitors alike. Also, the compact building form provides the foundation for Downtown Ardmore to be attractive to walking and other non-motorized modes of transportation. Downtown Ardmore’s land use pattern seems to be well established and is likely to remain. However, there are opportunities for building and site improvements, in addition to urban design and infrastructure improvements, that would enhance Downtown Ardmore’s character and prominence as the City’s focal point.
LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENTS

INTERSECTION UPGRADE

The intersection at Broadway and Main and Main and A St NE are edges where Broadway and Main become one-way streets. Although these intersections effectively handle traffic, their design will become obsolete as Main and Broadway are converted into two-way streets. The City should work with ODOT and property owners of adjacent properties, ensuring redesigns of intersections minimize potential conflict points and help serve as prominent gateways into Downtown Ardmore.

ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION

Although Main and Broadway are Downtown’s primary arteries, they can act more as pedestrian barriers in an environment that should be welcoming to pedestrians. Both are three-lane, one-way streets, designated ODOT truck routes. Their design width and capacity appears to far exceed existing volumes and creates a roadway conducive to high speeds. ODOT is currently in the process of revising the truck route and transferring jurisdiction of Main Street and Broadway Street to the City of Ardmore. The jurisdictional transfer provides the City with an opportunity to reconfigure both streets, including: “uncoupling” the one-way pairs, and reassessing the parking configurations. As the City redesigns the streets to accommodate a two-way traffic, both can easily accommodate angled parking on both sides, two traveled lanes, with a center median/turn lane. Currently parking is front-in angle parking, and creating a two-way street will require one side to change its angled parking orientation. In redesigning the streets the City should evaluate the appropriateness of reverse-in angle parking, which engineering studies have shown is safer.

SHARED USE PARKING

 Ideally, the built form of any downtown is compact, fostering a walkable environment. When parking is provided on a street-by-street, development-by-development basis, parking lots are desired.

Shared parking in both public and private parking lots, as well as parking lots of government buildings, reserve parking for specific businesses, but may go unused during non-business hours. The City should work with Carter County and the owners of private lots to promote shared use of parking, particularly in the evenings, allowing for public use after businesses are close. Parking lots with shared parking agreements should include clear signage that indicates when private parking lots are available for public use.

A STREET NE ROAD STREETScape

A Street NE is a north-south street on the eastern edge of Downtown Ardmore. Historically, the unstriped road served industrial uses on Downtown’s periphery. Recently, a number of entrepreneurs are repurposing industrial buildings as restaurants, bars, and other businesses. Following the significant amount of private investment in area, the City should improve the streetscape A Street NE between Main Street and 4th Avenue, contributing to the district’s continued emergence. Benches, planters, and pedestrian-scaled street lighting along the sidewalks, lane striping and on-street parking stalls are some of the improvements the City should consider for the street.

PEDESTRIAN CROSSING UPGRADE

As a pedestrian oriented area, it is essential to ensure that crosswalks are accessible to all pedestrians, helping create and maintain an efficient and welcoming environment. Many of Downtown Ardmore’s crosswalks are unmarked, deteriorating or non-existent. These current conditions hurt the area’s overall pedestrian friendliness, and making it difficult, if not impossible, for people with lower levels of physical mobility to navigate the area. The City should improve all crosswalks in Downtown as identified in the subarea plan, ensuring they are properly marked and ADA compliant.
LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENTS

RAILROAD QUIET ZONE
Under the Train Horn Rule (49 CFR Part 222), locomotive engineers must begin to sound train horns at least 15 seconds, and no more than 20 seconds, in advance of all public grade crossings. With three grade crossings, train horns are frequently heard blaring in Downtown. To improve Downtown’s atmosphere and experience for visitors, employees, and residents, the City should explore the feasibility of establishing a “Quiet Zone” downtown.

HISTORIC SANTA FE DEPOT & AMTRAK STATION
The Historic Santa Fe Depot has been recently renovated and converted into a community center available for rent to host various events. Depot Park, currently under construction, surrounds the Depot and will further strengthen this area as an important Downtown focal point and destination. The City should ensure the Historic Santa Fe Depot, Depot Park, and the City’s Amtrak Station are accessible and well connected to Downtown’s pedestrian network, and are promoted and publicized including Downtown wayfinding.

DOWNTOWN PARKS
In addition to providing opportunity for rest, relaxation, and recreation, parks will play an important social role for Downtown, providing opportunity for gathering and community events. There are plans for a park in Downtown, Depot Park, which is under construction at Main Street and A Street NE. The City should ensure these parks remain accessible and connected to Downtown’s pedestrian network, are well maintained, promoted in wayfinding signage throughout Downtown.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENTS
Although the City has made great strides in improving a number of façades in Downtown, there is more work to be done. Attractive and restored building façades play a strong role in injecting historic character and vitality into Downtown Ardmore. Done well, façade improvements can be catalytic, spurring investment in nearby and adjacent properties, and contribute to a stronger sense of pride among residents and business owners. The City should work with the Ardmore Historic Preservation Commission and Ardmore Main Street organization to promote and expand the existing façade improvement program, and identify potential buildings within the Ardmore Historic Commercial District that may utilize façade improvements. As candidates for façade improvements are identified, the City should work with property owners of candidate buildings and the Ardmore Historic Preservation Commission to ensure façade improvements conform to the established Ardmore Historic Commercial District Design Guidelines.

PRESERVATION AND REHABILITATION
In addition to façade improvements, there are several opportunities throughout Downtown for the adaptive reuse of existing older buildings. The Downtown Ardmore Historic District, part of the National Register of Historic Places, provides an opportunity for reuse projects to qualify for a 20% Federal Historic Tax Credit for property restoration. Casa Romo is a local success story of the program. The Main Street restaurant underwent a significant expansion partly funded by the credit. Thus, the City should work with the Ardmore Historic Preservation Commission and the Ardmore Main Street organization to promote the program’s availability and provide technical assistance to property owners and local developers.

MURALS & MOSAICS
A great way to enhance and define the image and identity of both Ardmore and its Downtown is through public art. In Downtown Ardmore specifically, many opportunities exist for additional and enhanced mosaics, murals, and ghost murals on large blank façades throughout Downtown Ardmore. In addition to improving the appearance of the area, these public art projects can help with wayfinding and aid residents and visitors in navigating Downtown. The City should partner with the Goddard Arts Center, local artists, the Ardmore Beautification Council, and Ardmore Public Schools to install murals and mosaics on Downtown buildings with large blank facades. This could also be expanded to include unscreened utility boxes, dumpsters, alleys, and other necessary, but unattractive, infrastructure.
Throughout Downtown Ardmore, there are several opportunities for short-term redevelopment. This section describes the potential for each site. However, investment in Downtown Ardmore should be encouraged for these sites. Previous pages identified incremental and long-term redevelopment potential in other areas. The Catalyst Opportunity Sites identified in this map include those with the greatest short-term potential due to parcels' vacancy, size, existing land use, and other factors.

### Catalyst Opportunity Sites

2. This vacant block provides an opportunity for a dense multi-family development.

3. The vacant school sites and buildings provide an opportunity for mixed-use development. Structurally-sound school buildings should be adaptively reused for office or school-related uses. The City could also explore campus expansion with existing institutions, including Mercy Memorial Health Center, University Center of Southern Oklahoma, and the Sam Noble Foundation. Areas along Washington Street are best suited for business uses, while the A Street storage site suited for multi-family development.

5. This site includes a vacant building and lot. Consolidating these lots would allow for a comprehensive redevelopment as either mixed-family development or townhouses. Parking should be located at the rear of the building and access through the existing alley.

10. This is a vacant lot that is opposite from Depot Park. The development of a multifamily, mixed-use building with attractive facades oriented towards both 3rd Street and Main Street should be located at the rear of the building and access through the existing alley.

11. This site includes a vacant building and lot. The former J.C. Yeats Building could be used as a mixed-use, multi-story building with a retail-oriented lower level and residential units above.

12. The vacant school lots and building provide an opportunity for mixed-use development. Structurally-sound school buildings should be adaptively reused for office or school-related uses. The City could also explore campus expansion with existing institutions, including Mercy Memorial Health Center, University Center of Southern Oklahoma, and the Sam Noble Foundation. Areas along Washington Street are best suited for business uses, while the A Street storage site suited for multi-family development.

### Mixed-Use Building Conversion Opportunities

The analysis of the development potential of short-term redevelopment sites within the Downtown area indicates the need to redevelop upper-floor apartment units in Ardmore. Due to the major district in which the presence of major employers of residents, such as MetroTel and the Mercy Memorial Health Center. Delineating this demand to Downtown and increasing the residential density of Downtown Ardmore should be a priority of the City. Several blocks of Downtown Ardmore provide excellent opportunities for mixed-use development, with commercial uses at the ground-floor and multi-family residential units on the upper floors. By permitting mixed-use development and residential development in Downtown, the City can strengthen Downtown as a vibrant and active core. Having residents living within Ardmore may strengthen Downtown Ardmore's cultural base, draw more visitors to the downtown area, and encourage community development.

Integrating mixed-use development in Downtown may be constrained by the City's existing regulations for parking, density, and building heights. Accommodating residential uses in the Downtown's existing building stock further complicates this effort. Development may fit into cost-prohibitive to not cost-prohibitive to accommodate upper-floor residential units, and off-street parking requirements for multi-family apartments. It should be noted, however, that the UDC did not specify off-street parking requirements for upper-floor apartments. Additional factors, such as the UDC requiring upper-floor apartment units to have conditional use permits and the lack of technical knowledge among local contractors, further make upper-floor apartment units seemingly a cost-prohibitive investment.

The City should create a zone that covers these blocks and offer financial incentives to make upper-floor apartment units a cost-effective investment for developers. Creating a local property tax abatement program in possible solution. For example, the Ardmore Development Authority offers an abatement for certain types of commercial and industrial uses with a minimum capital investment of $250,000 in payroll annually. Eligible businesses are exempt from paying property taxes for up to five years. Under such program, the City would lose initial financial gain but would generate long-term community benefits from occupied upper-floor residents.

Additionally, the City should reevaluate its parking requirements for multi-family units within. Downtown's current off-street parking requirements are 0.50 spaces per bedroom unit and 2.25 per efficiency unit, 1.0 per one-bedroom unit, 1.75 per two-bedroom unit, and 2.0 per three-bedroom unit. To assess the appropriateness of Downtown parking requirements, the City should identify this antiquity and ensure the parking requirements are low enough to ensure reoccupying existing structures to house upper-floor apartment units is not cost-prohibitive. In addition, the City should consider lowering upper-floor residential units 'as of right' instead of as a conditional use.
12th Avenue is one of the main connectors of I-35 and Commerce Street, carrying travelers from around and outside of the City. This corridor also is home to a high concentration of regional commercial development, such as Lowe’s and Carmike 8 Cinemas. Additionally, the Mercy Memorial Health Center, which is a major employer and healthcare facility, anchors this corridor. As with other areas of the City, 12th Avenue experiences inadequate landscaping, missing sidewalks, insufficient accessibility for both motorists and non-motorists, and land use conflict between commercial and adjacent residential neighborhoods. The subarea plan for 12th Avenue provides a set of recommendations that would help to transform 12th Avenue into an attractive, accessible, and safe corridor that would allow surrounding commercial development to attract and safely accommodate users from within and outside of Ardmore.

**Intersection Improvement**
- Decorative Overpass
- Future Road Alignment
- Future Commerce Street Reconstruction
- Facade Improvement
- Proposed Bike Lane
- Proposed Shared-Use Trail
- Future Residential to Commercial Conversion
- On-Site Green Infrastructure
- Shops at Ardmore Mall Expansion Area
- Planned Commercial Development

**Toolbox Improvement**
- Access Management
- Screening / Buffering
- Parking Lot Landscaping
- Opportunity Site

**Local Area Improvement**
- Sidewalk Connection
- Screening / Buffering
- Parking Lot Landscaping
- Opportunity Site

**Future Road Alignment.** The vast vacant land between 12th Avenue and Merrick Drive is envisioned to be a regional-based commercial and office hub. Future commercial and office development occur in this area, it is vital for the City to explore and implement a north-south connector between 12th Avenue and Merrick Drive to improve accessibility to the surrounding future developments.

**Shops at Ardmore Expansion Area.** There are about eight acres of land just west of the Shops at Ardmore. This is a prime area for additional anchor tenants for the mall. The mall expansion could occur at the existing Ulta Beauty Store and westward. The remaining areas north of the expansion can be dedicated to additional parking required by the City’s UDC. The City should enforce its parking and landscaping requirements and work with property owners to ensure the planned mall expansions adhere to best practices stated within the improvement toolbox.

**Future Commerce Street Reconstruction.** Despite being an important north-south roadway in the City, Commerce Street’s current alignment with frontage roads creates plenty of traffic conflict points. This adversely impacts traffic safety for all users. Given that Commerce Street is under the jurisdiction of ODOT, the City should work with ODOT to explore methods to realign Commerce Street into a safer road to traverse. The future realignment should take into account the planned roadway reconfiguration along 12th Avenue.
ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION

Prioritizing mobility over access, the current 12th Avenue cross section is not ideally suited for the regional commercial corridor that is envisioned. Currently, 12th Avenue is mostly a 4-lane road, with two travel lanes in each direction. With development continuing along the corridor, the City should prioritize working with ODOT to optimize the cross section, exploring a 3-lane configuration to improve overall accessibility.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

As a State Route, access points (signalized and unsignalized) along 12th Avenue are regulated by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation. In coordination with the roadway reconfiguration recommendation, signalized intersections should be explored. Additionally, existing signalized intersections, such as at 12th Avenue and Rockford Road, lack adequate pedestrian crossings and sidewalks at all corners, and make it almost impossible for a pedestrian to safely use the corridor. Understanding that most of the corridor’s patrons will arrive by the automobile, the corridor should not neglect pedestrians.

DECORATIVE HIGHWAY OVERPASS

The City of Ardmore is centrally located along I-35 between Dallas and Oklahoma City. Each day, more than 35,000 vehicles pass by Ardmore on the interstate. Working with ODOT, the City should seek to improve its appearance as viewed from the highway. This could include attractive landscaping and signage within the I-35 right-of-way, or a decorative overpass for 12th Avenue drawing attention to Ardmore from I-35. The design of the overpass should include decorative façade materials, landscaping, and lighting, and reflect the City’s character.

ON-SITE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure can beautify an area while assisting in minimizing flooding and runoff associated with stormwater. Characterized by large areas of impervious surfaces, the 12th Avenue corridor would be well served by green infrastructure installations. The City should promote the benefits of green infrastructure and work with the property owners in this area to explore ways to implement green infrastructure’s best practices, such as deep-rooted vegetative landscaping around the existing ditch and permeable pavers or pervious asphalt.

CONVERT RESIDENTIAL TO COMMERCIAL USES

Although the Land Use Plan designates this subarea as a Regional Commercial, there are remaining single-family homes with driveway access to 12th Avenue in some segments of the corridor. The long-term market competitiveness of these residential properties is likely not be sustainable, and their location along the heavily traveled road has diminished the quality-of-life for residential uses. The City should work with property owners, providing technical assistance related to parcel assembly and potential comprehensive redevelopment options.

INTERNAL CROSS ACCESS

The City should work with property owners to provide internal cross access wherever possible between commercial properties, connecting independent and isolated commercial uses with one another. Depending on the existing development pattern of the subject properties, cross access could occur either in the front of or at the rear of the buildings, but should be focused on directly connecting adjacent parking areas which would permit customers to travel between businesses on a parallel network and eliminate unnecessary trips onto 12th Avenue.

LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENTS

Exclusive left and/or center turn lanes remove stopped vehicles waiting to turn from through traffic, substantially reduce rear-end crashes. With development continuing along the corridor, the City should prioritize working with ODOT to optimize the cross section, exploring a 3-lane configuration to improve overall accessibility.
Rockford Road serves as an important north-south link between 12th Avenue and Broadway Street (Route 199), two of Ardmore’s main commercial corridors. Developed with hotels, restaurants, and convenience retail and service uses, the intersections at the north and south end have capitalized on visibility and access from I-35. A tributary of Hickory Creek, floodplains, the City’s Fire Department, and an active BNSF Railway present both challenges and opportunities for improvement along the corridor, including development of vacant sites, and redevelopment and repositioning of existing uses.

**Streetscape Improvement.** As development continues to occur along the southern portion of Rockford Road, the City should improve the streetscape with sidewalks, curbing, streetlights, and landscaped parkways. Developing landscaping around a potential gateway feature at the northeast corner of Broadway Street and Rockford Road will serve as an eye-catching entryway into the corridor and the City. Developing guidelines for storefront facades and architecture for future development along the corridor will help establish an attractive identity for Rockford Road and contribute to the development of an organized commercial corridor.

**Enhance & Protect Hickory Creek.** Hickory Creek in its natural form runs across Rockford Road just north of Autumn Run. The City should ensure that the creek is not only protected from future development through adequate buffering, but also establish native landscaping and permeable pavement requirements for commercial properties located adjacent to Hickory Creek, as well as encourage future property owners to integrate the creek into their site design, to preserve water and habitat quality. In addition, the City should work with existing property owners to retrofit their properties with native landscaping and benches around the creek, as well as with permeable pavement or pervious asphalt in the parking lots and walkways, to further protect and promote Hickory Creek as a pedestrian amenity.

**Additional Connection to Holiday Drive.** The City should explore an additional connection between Rockford Road and Holiday Drive. Similar to Crossroads Drive, a new connection would improve access to existing and future commercial developments along Holiday Drive; relieve a portion of existing traffic volume at 4th Avenue and Rockford Road; and, allow for more efficient subdivision of land.

**Holiday Drive Gateway Feature.** Located just west of Rockford Road, Holiday Drive is one of the City’s major retail areas. As a highly visible area with a variety of hospitality establishments, restaurants, and gas stations, the City should work with ODOT to add a gateway feature at the northeast corner of Broadway Street and Rockford Road to welcome visitors to the City. In addition, the City should work with ODOT to establish highway signage that will draw people to the area.
ROADWAY RECONFIGURATION

North of the BNSF Railway, Rockford Road’s configuration is a four-lane cross section, with two travel lanes in each direction. South of the railroad, it consists of only a two-lane cross section, with a single lane in each direction. Throughout its entire length, turn lanes, sidewalks, and other pedestrian infrastructure is absent. Current traffic counts are not available for Rockford Road, however, they are less than 20,000 ADT, making them best suited for a three-lane cross section – two travel lanes in each direction with a center turn lane. The City should undertake a traffic study to determine existing and future traffic counts and construct/reconfigure the street to its optimal configuration.

ROCKFORD & 4TH IMPROVEMENT

As a strategic north-south street linking two major arteries, and the location of the City’s Fire Department, the City should explore the possibility of a grade separated crossing of the active BNSF Railway. An underpass or overpass would allow the City to improve the intersection of Rockford Road and 4th Avenue, with a signal or four-way stop. At a minimum, the crossing should be improved with sidewalks to sufficiently and safely accommodate pedestrians.

ON-SITE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Implementing green infrastructure’s best practices is a great way to beautify an area while minimizing stormwater flooding and runoff. With a tributary of Hickory Creek passing through the subarea, large portions of the subarea are within floodplain. The City should promote the benefits of green infrastructure and work with the property owners in this area to explore ways to implement green infrastructure’s best practices, such as deep-rooted vegetative landscaping around the existing ditch and permeable pavers or pervious asphalt in parking lots and walkways.
Establishing an accessible, efficient, and well-connected transportation system is crucial to maintaining the growing success of Ardmore’s economy. The transportation system in the City of Ardmore consists of roadways, rail lines, transit services, and non-motorized systems. Because the transportation system is what connects the public with goods, services, and community resources, it is of the utmost importance that the transportation system remains as accessible as possible to the City’s residents and visitors.

The Transportation Plan focuses on improving and enhancing the transportation system to reduce inefficiencies in circulation, expanding and enhancing the pedestrian and bicycle network, and improving areas where parking is excessive or inefficiently structured. The Transportation Plan is based on an assessment of the existing transportation conditions in the City as well as the input received during community outreach and engagement.

**FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF STREETS**

All roadways in Ardmore are classified according to a national system utilized by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The classification establishes the function of each segment within the larger transportation network, and includes the following designations:

- **Expressways** are high-speed roadways that provide high levels of mobility but no direct land access. They connect activity centers, employment hubs, and other important destinations to one another, and prioritize regional efficiency and speed.

- **Arterials** carry lower traffic volumes than expressways but are still busier than most other roadways. They connect expressways, rural highways and major urban activity centers and traffic flow is predominantly across or through a city.

- **Collectors** provide traffic circulation with neighborhoods, commercial, and industrial areas, and collect traffic from local streets and channel it into the arterial system.

- **Locals** include all other roadways not classified as expressways, arterials, or collectors. They are typically used for local trips and provide direct access to local land uses.

**INTER-JURISDICTIONAL COOPERATION**

The City of Ardmore is responsible for the oversight and maintenance of its local, arterial, and collector roads. Many roads that run through the City, such as Broadway Street, Commerce Street, Veterans Boulevard, Sam Noble Parkway, and I-35 are under the jurisdiction of the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT). Major improvements to these roadways require state approval and are typically funded by state and federal dollars, which can limit the City’s ability to make improvements and control road access in these specific areas. It is important that the City work cooperatively with ODOT to balance regional priorities with local objectives.
PROJECT FUNDING
The City should continue to budget for the maintenance, repair, and upgrade of existing streets as a part of the Capital Improvement Plan. The City should also work with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Authority (FTA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), ODOT, and other public and private partners to identify funding for improvements detailed within the Comprehensive Plan. Chapter 11: Implementation provides more details about potential funding sources.

CIRCULATION ISSUES
Maintaining efficient, safe circulation of the City’s roadways is crucial to establishing and maintaining a transportation network that maximizes vehicular and pedestrian accessibility while minimizing potential conflicts. Establishing a transportation system with complete north-south and east-west throughways, an easily accessible Downtown, safe and efficient intersections, and well-circulated parking will improve the quality of life of residents and visitors. In addition, improving the access and circulation of commercial areas could benefit businesses by enabling more customers to visit the area.

INTERSECTIONS
Intersections should be designed in a way that balances the needs of all modes of transportation. Intersection design should be context sensitive and should strive to minimize points of conflict at the intersection between all users. Throughout the planning process, there were several intersections that were identified as being problematic, difficult to navigate, and unsafe for pedestrians and motorists. These intersections include:
- Rockford Road & 4th Avenue NW
- Broadway Street & G Street NW
- Main Street & K Street
- 3rd Avenue NW & Caddo Street NE
- 2nd Avenue NE & Caddo Street NE
- Northwest Boulevard & Chickasaw Boulevard NW
- 12th Avenue & Commerce Street
- C Street NW & Broadway Street
- Broadway Street & 1st Avenue NW

RECOMMENDATIONS
Improvements to these intersections should include:
- Ensure that crosswalks are well-marked and appropriately-lit that best inform pedestrians and motorists.
- Minimize crosswalk lengths, including the use of curb bump-outs or pedestrian refuge areas.
- Where appropriate, install signage, LED crosswalk indicators, and countdown timers to inform pedestrians and motorists.
- Provide enhanced signalization, such as coordinated signal timing or adaptive signal timing, to increase the efficiency of vehicular movement through intersections.
- Improve road alignment and ensure appropriately sized curb radii.

The City should conduct a more detailed engineering assessment before any improvements are made, and continue to identify and improve problematic intersections to maintain a safe and efficient transportation system for pedestrians and motorists.

INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS
Ardmore’s interchanges are key areas where regional commercial activities are expected to develop. As regional commercial develops around the southern interchange at US Highway 70 and I-35, it is essential for the City to ensure the safety of travelers as they enter and exit their retail destinations.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Recommendations for improvements in this area include:
- Ensure adequate street lighting around regional commercial hubs.
- As regional commercial develops around the southern interchange at US 70 and I-35, work with ODOT and property owners to ensure that developments do not create unnecessary curb cuts on US 70.
- Work with ODOT to ensure safe and efficient traffic signal timing.
- Work with ODOT to improve the safety and function of Exit 33.
EXPANDED & RESTRUCTURED ROADWAYS

The configuration of Ardmore's grid system makes travelling east-west in Ardmore relatively more difficult compared to travelling north-south. The creation of an east-west throughway will aid in increasing the overall accessibility of the transportation system by creating a complete, east-west connection through the City, linking it to major commercial corridors. As Ardmore continues to grow, it is also essential that the City continue to maintain a balanced network of collector and arterial streets in future growth areas to adequately support future development.

Main Street and Broadway Street currently function as one-way streets in the Downtown, creating a confusing circulation pattern. The increased traffic flow from the direct connection of US Highway 199 to Ardmore's Main Street also contributes to increased congestion and inefficient circulation in the Downtown. ODOT is currently in the process of revising the truck route and transferring jurisdiction of Main Street and Broadway Street to the City of Ardmore. The jurisdictional transfer provides the City with an opportunity to reconfigure Downtown streets and while working with ODOT to provide more efficient routes through the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the overall accessibility of the Ardmore's roadways, the City should take the following actions:

- Work with ODOT to establish an east-west throughway connecting 12th Avenue with Sam Noble Parkway.
- Continue to repair and maintain a balanced network of collector and arterial streets to support development in future growth areas.
- Work with ODOT to convert Broadway Street to a two-way street, allowing for vehicles to more easily travel throughout the Downtown.
- Convert Main Street to a two-way street, which will maximize the efficiency of vehicular and pedestrian access to Ardmore's main commercial strip.
- Work with ODOT to reroute US Highway 199 around the Downtown, potentially via north on Commerce Street and east on Veterans Boulevard.
Establishing major throughways as clear gateways into the City is an essential part of improving the City’s overall identity and navigability.

As the City continues to grow, West Broadway Street should develop into a commercial corridor, making it a prime location to be established as a major gateway into the City.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

As West Broadway street develops, the City should include the following provisions:

- Encourage the establishment of shared driveways for commercial uses to internalize traffic circulation.
- Avoid excessive and unnecessary curb cuts for commercial development.
- Ensure adequate street lighting around commercial areas.
- Provide enhanced signalization, such as coordinated signal timing or adaptive signal timing, to increase the efficiency of vehicular movement.
- Install gateway features and wayfinding signage along West Broadway Street, welcoming motorists into the City and informing them of Ardmore’s major corridors.

**PARKING IMPROVEMENTS**

The City currently has adequate parking space for its major commercial corridors, however, there are many opportunities for improving the access, circulation, and overall efficiency parking, particularly throughout 12th Avenue. For example, the parking lots for Ardmore Commons and Mountain View Mall contains large amounts of unused parking spaces, which creates large areas of underutilized space.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The City should take the following actions to ensure adequate parking supply and circulation in commercial corridors:

- Either lower the parking minimum requirements or utilize parking maximums in the City’s UDC to prevent future commercial development from having excessive parking capacity.
- Ensure that parking lots have adequate cross-access with adjacent parking lots.
- Ensure that parking lots contain adequate curb cuts, and that unnecessary curb cuts are eliminated so as to efficiently direct traffic.

For more detailed recommendations on parking improvements, please see Chapter 7: Commercial and Industrial Framework Plan.

**SOUTHERN OKLAHOMA RURAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (SORTS)**

The Southern Oklahoma Rural Transportation System (SORTS) is on-demand bus system that operates every weekday from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM, where services outside of operation can be contracted. SORTS is able to dispatch buses for the purpose of commuting to and from work, school, shopping, medical appointments, or social excursions.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following actions will allow the City to better assess the demand of public transportation services, the most appropriate hours to offer services, and locations where bus shelters would be beneficial:

- The City should gather data to create and maintain a database of areas frequented by public transportation vehicles and heavy foot traffic during peak hours. This data would most efficiently be visualized as point data on maps using GIS.
- In addition, the City should work with SORTS and the Chickasaw Nation Transportation Services to better collect data on behaviors related to transportation.
- Continue to monitor transit ridership and demand and periodically evaluate the feasibility of fixed routes in the community.
FREIGHT RAIL
There are almost 35 miles of BNSF Railway running through Ardmore from Oklahoma City, as well as south into Texas. One of the biggest physically-divisive obstacles in the Ardmore community is the existence of rail lines, separating the eastern part of the City from most amenities and services. Many common-grade separated roadways that cross through the rail line lack adequate lighting and signage, and are in poor maintenance, creating an unattractive, unsafe place for travelers to cross. The common grade-separated roadways that cross through the rail lines include Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Sam Noble Parkway, and Washington Street/Lake Murray Drive. Additionally, the infrastructure around grade crossings in the Downtown are designed in a manner that requires trains to sound their horns when approaching, creating a loud environment for surrounding businesses and nearby residential areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS
The City can improve the safety of areas surrounding the rail lines and minimize noise pollution with the following actions:

- Install adequate street lighting around the crossings at Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Sam Noble Parkway, and Washington Street/Lake Murray Drive.
- Work with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) to restructure grade crossings, establishing quiet zones in and around the Downtown and residential neighborhoods.
- Communicate with the FRA and the BNSF Railway to explore the possibility of relocating the switching yard outside of Downtown Ardmore. Insert VIGN Switching Yard Highlight

AMTRAK
Amtrak’s Heartland Flyer route, which connects Oklahoma City and Fort Worth, has a station in Ardmore. From Fort Worth, commuters are able to transfer to the Texas Eagle, that connects with Dallas, Texas, San Antonio, Texas, and Chicago, Illinois. The train station in Ardmore has approximately 10 short-term and 10 long-term parking spaces. Amtrak’s daily passenger service occurs at 10:00 AM and 7:25 PM at the Station Building in Downtown Ardmore. The Amtrak station in Ardmore is a valuable asset, as it provides an opportunity for travelers to converge from not only across the region, but also from around the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS
To fully take full advantage of this asset, the City should take the following actions:

- Promote the availability of Amtrak service in the community.
- Consider providing informational signage displaying train routes and connections accessible from the Heartland Flyer route station, including information on transfers.
- Enhance the area surrounding the Amtrak station with native perennial landscaping.
- Partner with local artists to install public art around the Amtrak station.
- Ensure Depot Park, which is currently under construction and is adjacent to the Amtrak Station, has signage directing users to the Amtrak station.
AIRPORTS

Ardmore’s two airports are the Ardmore Downtown Executive Airport and the Ardmore Municipal Airport. The former is primarily used for charter air service and hobby flying (with an average of 33 flights per day), while the latter is primarily utilized for both charter air service and freight delivery (averaging 125 flights per day). In addition to current airport operations, there are surrounding areas that may support further development of production and employment uses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should continue to support airport operations and market adjacent areas through the following actions:

- Leverage availability and service of the Community’s airports in its economic development efforts.
- Maintain communication with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to remain up to date on RPZ’s and other FAA regulations to avoid development conflicts.
- Evaluate and install adequate land use buffers around the existing facility.
- Evaluate and plan for the support of emerging industrial and development areas.
- Evaluate and plan for the development of industrial and supportive land use expansions adjacent to the airport(s).
- As development occurs, evaluate and analyze the noise impact and potential abatement plan for the surrounding area.

INNOVATIVE, DISRUPTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Innovative, disruptive technology, such as ride-sharing, is an excellent way to augment the City’s overall transit service and further reduce the community’s dependence on personal vehicles. Ride-sharing services, such as Uber and Lyft, will provide residents with more freedom to travel throughout the City without having to rely on their personal vehicles. In addition, attracting such ride-sharing services to the City may also appeal to incoming residents and young professionals, as many people in this demographic rely heavily on ride-sharing services to meet their daily needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should take the following steps to encourage ride-sharing services to locate in Ardmore:

- Encourage community members to download and sign up with ride-sharing apps.
- Contact ride-sharing companies to express the desire of these services in Ardmore along with a willingness to establish a partnership.
- Encourage community members to inquire about opportunities to drive for ride-sharing companies.

UNDERUTILIZED & VACANT ALLEYS

The majority of Ardmore’s alleys are no longer maintained by the City, which leads to the creation of underutilized and dead space in residential neighborhoods. This can lead to crime in residential areas by providing an empty, visually-unattractive space that residents are likely to avoid. Vacated alleys, however, provide an excellent opportunity for the development of trails, green infrastructure, and additional lot space being transferred to adjacent property owners, enhancing the unique identities and overall vibrancy of Ardmore’s neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve existing alleys and maintain safe, efficient spaces, the City should pursue the following actions:

- Convert unused alleys into trails for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Install green infrastructure, such as permeable pavers and native, perennial landscaping, to create attractive neighborhood spaces for residents to enjoy.
- Work with interested property owners to convert segments of alleyways as additional lot space.
- Continue to repair and maintain functioning alleys.
MOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Employment Density

- 256 or fewer jobs per sq. mile
- 257 - 850 jobs per sq. mile
- 851 - 1,907 jobs per sq. mile
- 1,908 - 3,386 jobs per sq. mile
- 3,387 or greater jobs per sq. mile

Transportation & Mobility
City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan
SIDEWALK NETWORK

Ardmore’s existing sidewalk network is mostly concentrated in and around the City’s core. Despite the availability of the federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program that provides funding for sidewalks, the area surrounding the Plainview School campus has no pedestrian infrastructure. Nearby subdivisions and future development in this area should have sidewalks that connect with the school. To establish a well-connected, complete sidewalk network, it is important that the City continues to actively construct and extend sidewalks and work with property owners to repair and maintain sidewalks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can take the following steps to ensure that its sidewalk network is safe, efficient, and accessible to pedestrians:

» Encourage property owners to utilize the City’s reimbursement program to repair deteriorating sidewalks and fill in gaps in the sidewalk network. Under this program, the City would rebate property owners with a flat fee per square foot of qualifying sidewalk.

» Ensure that every residential street has sidewalks on at least one side of the road, connecting neighborhood with nearby schools.

» Provide sidewalk curb ramps at all intersections and address ADA design requirements.

» Work with ODOT, residents, and school districts to propose a SRTS project aimed at expanding sidewalks and bicycle lanes, identifying problematic segments of sidewalk, and establishing a program to construct new sidewalks in incomplete areas of the City, connecting residential neighborhoods with schools.

» Establish a Special Service Area (SSA) in the Downtown to increase the maintenance of sidewalks.

» Implement special assessments and recapture agreements for new development and redevelopment, allowing the local government to recover the cost of designing, installing, and maintaining sidewalks.
TRAILS

There are currently 5.5 miles of attractive, well-maintained off-street trails within Regional Park and along Veterans Boulevard. These trails connect residents to Ardmore Schools, the University Center of Southern Oklahoma, and Murray State College. The City of Ardmore should continue to expand trail development in innovative ways, encouraging their use by community members and visitors. Transforming abandoned rail corridors into greenways or creating a "trail-by-rail" is an effective way to enhance pedestrian and bicycle transportation networks, while creating a unique recreational amenity for the community. Additionally, expanding trail networks by converting unused alleys into neighborhood trails is also a creative way to enhance residential areas and connect them with existing parks and recreation facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To further expand and enhance Ardmore’s trail system, the City should consider pursuing the following actions:

» Explore the potential for a regional trail along the Frisco Railroad with the BNSF, ODOT, the Southern Oklahoma Development Association, the Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments, and other neighboring communities.

» Consider local trail development along the Frisco Railroad right-of-way, an overgrown, abandoned rail corridor that traverses through the east side of the City and connects with the Downtown.

» Work with the BNSF Railway to create a trail-by-rail in Downtown Ardmore to beautify the area and provide additional recreation to nearby neighborhoods.

» Convert unused, unmaintained alleys into connected trails for residential areas.

BICYCLE NETWORK

Ardmore can establish a citywide, coordinated transportation network for pedestrians and cyclists that provides safe, efficient transportation for its residents and visitors by extending bicycle infrastructure to connect with employment, shopping, schools, and recreational areas. The City’s current bicycle infrastructure is comprised of on-street bicycle lanes and routes, mostly outside of the Downtown; however, a connected bicycle route does exist, linking Lake Murray State Park to Regional Park along the east side of Downtown and along Main Street. The City should create and extend connections throughout Downtown Ardmore, as well as to the west of the City’s core, paying special attention to extending bicycle infrastructure to underserved neighborhoods in the far east, west, and north areas of the Downtown. This will not only increase non-motorized access to parks and recreation areas, but may also encourage more members of the community to frequent these destinations via bicycle rather than driving.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can extend and enhance its bicycle network through the following actions:

» Establish the Downtown as a priority pedestrian and bicycle improvement area by developing a connected network of on-street bicycle lanes, linking Main Street with Rockford Road, 12th Avenue, and Veterans Boulevard.

» Create off-street bicycle trails along the Rockford Road and 12th Avenue corridors.

» Develop a comprehensive bicycle master plan, identifying key north-south and east-west routes through the City.

» Partner with local schools and the Police Department to promote pedestrian and bicycle safety.

» Establish a policy to educate Ardmore’s motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians on bicycle safety.
The modernization of local government facilities and services to match the growing size and evolving needs of the Ardmore community will ensure a high quality of life for local residents well into the future. In addition, it will preserve a predictable operating environment supportive of business investment that will contribute to the City's overall economic vitality.

The City of Ardmore is in charge of maintaining and providing all major infrastructure and services to its residents, which include water, sanitation, engineering, fire, police, library, and parks. Ardmore has a City Manager-Commission form of government, which oversees the City's 17 departments. The Ardmore City Commission, which elects the Mayor, consists of five members, including one commissioner at large and one commissioner for each of the City's four wards. The Community Facilities and Infrastructure Plan identifies opportunities for the City to partner with community service providers and organizations. The recommendations detailed in this section provide an outline for how the City can begin leveraging shared assets to more efficiently and effectively meet the facility and service demands of the Ardmore community. The purpose of the Community Facilities and Infrastructure Plan is to identify challenges that the City of Ardmore must overcome to excel in its community facilities and infrastructure provision, and provide recommendations to ensure residents enjoy the benefits of high-quality and efficient community services.

The overall health, safety, and general welfare of the community is largely impacted by the perception and quality of the community’s public safety, infrastructure, education, and healthcare. The following details key recommendations that the City should pursue to improve the community’s perception of these elements as well as enhance their quality.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Ardmore Fire Department is efficiently staffed and has station locations throughout the City. Its water supply and distribution systems are sufficient for firefighting, and the City’s fire insurance rating is better than that of neighboring communities. Currently, there are three fire stations within the City of Ardmore, but there are plans being implemented to renovate the existing fire station on K Street SE and to construct a replacement fire station on 125 Veterans Boulevard. The City should continue to coordinate with the Fire Department on future residential growth and development since future growth will impact the Fire Department’s service abilities.

The Ardmore Police Department is committed to developing relationships with the community to identifying and resolving any potential issues that may arise in the future. The Police Department currently operates out of the Ardmore City Hall building at 23 South Washington Street, and there are no current plans for the facility’s renovation or expansion. In 2015, the Police Department reported a 16 percent decrease in reported crimes. To combat any issues of perception, the Police Department should continue to regularly communicate with and inform residents of Ardmore.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The three most important factors that most homeowners consider when buying or renting a home are affordability, safety, and the quality of its nearby schools. It is imperative that the Police Department combat any false perceptions related to crime in Ardmore, as this perception influences the residential market by deterring families from moving into the community, as well as discouraging visitors from becoming regular customers at local businesses and commercial centers. The Police Department should actively inform and educate residents on the City’s crime rates by publishing crime statistics on its website and disseminating these statistics to local information providers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can pursue the following actions to continue the provision of effective public safety measures throughout the community:

- Partner with the Ardmore Police Department to actively inform the public on the City’s crime rates, publish crime statistics to the City’s website, and furnish statistics to local information providers.
- Encourage the Ardmore Police Department to partner with local schools and libraries to educate and maintain its level of trust within the community.
- Foster inter-departmental collaboration with the Ardmore Police Department and other City departments to help identify potential public safety issues, such as street lighting and property maintenance.

The City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan

COMMUNITY FACILITIES & INFRASTRUCTURE

City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan

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INFRASTRUCTURE

The Public Works Department is responsible for providing water and sanitation to the City, sourcing its water from Ardmore’s five lake reservoirs. There are currently no reported issues with existing facilities, but the Public Works Department does plan to upgrade its wastewater treatment plant within the next three to 10 years.

The positioning of utilities is another important factor of community infrastructure that the City should consider. Many utility boxes along several commercial corridors are placed at developments’ front yards, while most other communities discretely integrate utility boxes into the building’s site design. Positioning utilities in a development’s front yard negatively impacts the corridors’ aesthetics. The City should modify its utility and building standards to remedy this issue for future developments.

The Public Works Department does not provide its municipal water and sanitation services to undeveloped land on the fringe of the community. When development takes place in these areas, developers are required to pay for the necessary infrastructure. Some instances of sprawling development have led to insufficient number and construction of sewers, ditches, and septic systems, which have resulted in localized flooding and pollution in subdivision developments.

The interchange at I-35 and US Highway 70 is envisioned to be a secondary hub of regional commercial development but is not currently served by water and sewer infrastructure. The City will have to expand its water and sewer lines to allow for regional development to occur in this location. On a related note, to ensure that the expansion of infrastructure and future land use and development do not adversely impact the City’s finances, the City should prepare a financial planning strategy. There are various techniques that the City could utilize to better integrate financial planning with its land use and development planning. Generally, the City should work to include strategic financial planning criteria and analyses as part of the City’s long-range land use planning and development review processes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can enhance its infrastructure through the following actions:

» Expand water and sewer lines along Commerce Street south towards US Highway 70 and westward to the interchange to encourage regional commercial development.

» Routinely review services offered by the City to determine their impact and identify opportunities to better align services with the needs of the community.

» Routinely identify short-, medium-, and long-term infrastructure, road, and facility projects.

» Complete and annually review a five-year Capital Improvement Program to identify short-term and long-term construction, maintenance, and improvement projects as well as infrastructure replacements and upgrades. Amend the UDC, as well as utility and building standards, to integrate utility boxes into building and site designs, requiring utilities to be placed to the rear of structures when possible and using urban design elements to shield utilities from pedestrian view.
The community’s perception of education and schools is critical to maintaining its standing as an attractive place to live, as the quality of nearby schools impacts the decision of where families choose to reside. This also influences the decisions of the development community, as they are interested in developing in profitable locations where existing and incoming residents are likely to move. Consequently, it is imperative for the City to debunk any misconceptions related to schools and education in Ardmore, and identify areas for improvement to ensure that future development and investment is appropriately directed.

The City of Ardmore encompasses four school districts:
- Ardmore (central portion of the City)
- Dickson (eastern portions of the City)
- Plainview (western portion of the City)
- Springer (airport portion of the City)

The majority of Ardmore’s residential neighborhoods are located within the Ardmore School District. Ardmore Middle School is one of the six schools in Oklahoma that was named a Blue Ribbon School in 2008 by the U.S. Department of Education. This award recognizes the school’s significant improvement in student performance across all student bodies.

The Plainview School District is located near the southwestern fringes of the City. The Plainview School District’s infrastructure is struggling to effectively serve its growing student population, as it is currently at capacity, with enrollment expected to grow over the next five years. There are plans, however, to update the district’s facilities and establish a new early childhood education facility in the coming years.
PERCEPTION GAP BETWEEN ARDMORE & PLAINVIEW SCHOOL DISTRICTS

School districts have significant influence on where families choose to live. A large portion of market-rate housing units are constructed and sold within the Plainview School District, which some perceive to be a more desirable school district compared to the Ardmore School District. This is likely due to Plainview’s strong focus on preparation for standardized testing. In part due to this perception, less investment in housing has been occurring within the Ardmore School District, or the central or east sides of the community. This perception divide is detrimental for the residents and City alike, as it impacts the community’s service provision, social fabric, and the built environment.

In addition to the perception divide between the Ardmore and Plainview school districts, schools represent an intensive land use and generate high levels of traffic and use utilities at rates similar to commercial developments. There is a need to minimize the school facilities’ negative impacts on surrounding neighborhoods and maximize the utility of their location and corresponding benefits to the local community. The City can address this issue by working with school districts, residents, and appropriate transportation agencies to develop access and circulation improvement plans for school zones. This will reduce traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety during school activities and events.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can take the following steps to help eliminate the perceived divide between the Ardmore and Plainview school districts:

» Partner with Ardmore Public Schools to market them to the public, emphasizing their achievements and promoting them as an attractive option for families.

» Support school faculty, staff, and students in strengthening the curriculum and facilities of Ardmore Public Schools.

» Facilitate various activities between the Ardmore and Plainview school districts, such as coordinating with the two districts to adopt a unified school calendar, to help bridge any perceived differences between the two.

» Consider hosting a City-sponsored academic award event to recognize outstanding performance from local students.

» Encourage volunteerism for local school programs.

» Proactively and regularly communicate with the Ardmore and Plainview school districts to stay updated on possible campus expansions and increased demands in services.

» Provide incentives for developers to build market-rate housing in the central and east areas of Ardmore to provide attractive housing options for families.

» Work with the school districts, residents, and appropriate transportation agencies to develop access and circulation improvement plans for school zones to minimize traffic congestion and improve pedestrian safety.

» Coordinate with local non-profit organizations to promote mentorship programs for at-risk students.

» Incorporate dedicated spaces for youth within planned developments, park and recreation facilities, and in Ardmore’s Downtown.
HIGHER EDUCATION

Several higher education and research institutions exist within the City of Ardmore. These institutions tend to specialize in unique areas of study, such as innovative agricultural research, bringing many talented minds to the community. Ardmore’s higher education and research institutions include the University Center of Southern Oklahoma, Southern Oklahoma Technology Center, and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation.

UNIVERSITY CENTER OF SOUTHERN OKLAHOMA

The University Center of Southern Oklahoma provides degree programs from East Central University, Murray State College, and Southeastern Oklahoma State University. The facility is at full capacity, and enrollment is expected to increase over the next five years. It is undertaking several major projects, such as improving the student services area, and expanding its testing laboratory and health programming.

SOUTHERN OKLAHOMA TECHNOLOGY CENTER

The Southern Oklahoma Technology Center provides vocational, technology, and other business training to its students. Its main campus is over-capacity, and an increase is needed. Because enrollment is expected to increase over the next five years, it is undertaking several major projects, such as building a new building to add space for the student services area, and expanding its testing laboratory and health programming.

SAMUEL ROBERTS NOBLE FOUNDATION

The Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, founded in 1945, is an independent and non-profit institution situated in Eastern Oklahoma. It is one of several such institutions in Eastern Oklahoma. It has 3,500 students and conducts its direct operations with ranchers and farmers. The foundation also undertakes plant science research and agricultural programs to improve agricultural productivity at regional, national, and international levels. It also supports educational, philanthropic, and general welfare activities. It has expanded almost to $1 billion, with more than $360 million for charitable purposes, including more than $100 million for grants to charitable organizations and scholarship programs.

WORKFORCE & CONTINUING EDUCATION

Residents and stakeholders have similarly expressed concern regarding the need to attract and retain a trained and talented workforce. To remedy this, the City should focus on building strategic partnerships with the University Center of Southern Oklahoma, Southern Oklahoma Technology Center, area colleges, and local employers to provide workforce development programs and format the curriculum to respond to local job needs. Additionally, the City can facilitate the use of the Ardmore Public Library and municipal spaces to host programs and services for students interested in building their professional skills. Programs and services can include interviewing workshops, resume building workshops, business and marketing classes, and coding classes. These partnerships and programs can provide unique opportunities for students while simultaneously providing avenues for establishing a more skilled, trained, and professional workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can help to build its skilled workforce through the following actions:

- Facilitate partnerships between Ardmore Public Schools and higher education and research institutions, such as the University Center of Southern Oklahoma, Southern Oklahoma Technology Center, and the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation, to cultivate a trained, talented workforce.
- Pursue joint grant funding programs with Ardmore Public Schools and workforce organizations to establish workforce and entrepreneurship development programs, formatting curriculum to respond to local job needs.
- Facilitate the use of the Ardmore Public Library and municipal spaces to host programs and services for students interested in building their professional skills.
- Encourage the creation of a mentorship program between local businesses and students to provide professional-work experience.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Ardmore Public Library, located at 120 East Street NE, is the only City-operated library within the community. Currently, the City has no plans to renovate the Ardmore Public Library or to construct a new facility. The City should continually monitor the Ardmore Public Library’s state of operations to anticipate future needs and necessary renovations or expansions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should continue to support Ardmore Public Library through the following action:

- Regularly communicate with the Ardmore Public Library to stay informed about expansion plans and service needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should continue to support local medical facilities and other healthcare service providers, and ensure that they are accessible to all residents through the following actions:

- Regularly communicate with Mercy Hospital and the Chickasaw Nation Health Clinic, provide local healthcare services and have the potential to employ a significant number of highly paid, skilled workers to drive the local economy. To ensure that these facilities are accessible to Ardmore’s residents, the City should establish safe and accessible routes to healthcare facilities. For example, the City should support intersection improvements on 12th Avenue and Commerce Street to include safe, pedestrian amenities. In addition, the City should coordinate with SORTS to evaluate transit demand and ensure the provision of sufficient coverage to the medical facilities. This will allow the hospital to be accessible by foot from adjacent residential neighborhoods and will improve access to medical facilities for residents who do not own a vehicle or are unable to drive.

HEALTHCARE

Medical facilities, such as Mercy Hospital and the Chickasaw Nation Health Clinic, provide local healthcare services and have the potential to employ a significant number of highly paid, skilled workers to drive the local economy. To ensure that these facilities are accessible to Ardmore’s residents, the City should establish safe and accessible routes to healthcare facilities. For example, the City should support intersection improvements on 12th Avenue and Commerce Street to include safe, pedestrian amenities. In addition, the City should coordinate with SORTS to evaluate transit demand and ensure the provision of sufficient coverage to the medical facilities. This will allow the hospital to be accessible by foot from adjacent residential neighborhoods and will improve access to medical facilities for residents who do not own a vehicle or are unable to drive.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City should continue to support local medical facilities and other healthcare service providers, and ensure that they are accessible to all residents through the following actions:

- Regularly communicate with Mercy Hospital and the Chickasaw Nation Health Clinic to stay informed about expansion plans and service needs.
- Establish safe and accessible routes to healthcare facilities for patients and employees alike.
- Support intersection improvements on 12th Avenue and Commerce Street to include signalized, striped crosswalks.
- Coordinate with SORTS to evaluate transit demand and ensure the provision of sufficient coverage to the medical facilities.
CHAPTER 10
OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES
Parks and recreation facilities include:
- Broadlawn Park
- Cardinal Park
- Central Park
- Charlotte Hall Park
- Community Water Park
- Dornick Hills Golf & Country Club
- Douglas Park
- Finkel Park
- HFV Wilson Community Center
- Lake Jean Neustadt
- Lake Murray Drive Viaduct Park
- Lake Murray State Park
- Lake Scott King
- Lakeside Golf Course
- Mountain Lake
- Regional Park
- Selbyville Park
- Southwest Park
- Walker Park
- Whittington Park

**PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS**

The City is actively expanding and improving its parks and recreation facilities. New park projects currently underway in downtown Ardmore include Depot Park at the northeast corner of Main Street and A Street. Improvements include renovating the HFV Wilson Community Center, constructing a Family Entertainment Center at Regional Park, adding a splash pad at Southwest Park, resurfacing splash pads at three other city parks, renovating Cardinal Park, resurfacing tennis courts at Walker Park, and improving recreation infrastructure at Regional Park. Such additions and improvements will increase the quality and longevity of the City’s parks and recreation facilities and enhance the quality of life of its residents.

**PARKS & TRAIL PLANNING**

The City’s Trail Master Plan is 20 years old, and there is no master plan for the City’s parks and recreation. Developing a Parks & Recreation Master Plan in concert with an update to the Trail Master Plan should provide a comprehensive inventory of Ardmore’s parks as well as plans for expanding the existing trail network, enhancing and expanding its parks and recreation facilities, and better connecting parks and recreation facilities with residents and visitors. This update will be essential in providing guidance on how the City’s parks and trails should evolve in the future, and will inform the future expansion of greenways, trails, and non-motorized connections to parks and recreation facilities.

Although Ardmore appears to have adequate parkland based on the NRPA population-based standards, access to parkland could be improved for residential areas. The City should consider developing neighborhood and pocket parks in the City core, as well as in underserved residential areas, such as in the neighborhood southwest of the intersection of Highway 199 and Commerce Street.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The City can enhance and expand its parks and recreation facilities through the following actions:

- Update and redefine the 1997 Trails Master Plan to create a Parks & Recreation Master Plan to establish a vision for the park’s system, inform the expansion of greenways, trails, and non-motorized connections to parks and recreation facilities, identify needed improvements, and to serve as a guide on how the City’s parks and trails should evolve in the future.
- Develop a neighborhood or park in the neighborhood southwest of the intersection of Highway 199 and Commerce Street.
- Develop a neighborhood or park within downtown Ardmore.
- Work with nearby property owners to create a neighborhood park south of the Twelfth Avenue Office Park.
An essential part of maintaining and promoting parks, open space, and recreation facilities is through wayfinding and informational signage. The City should consider creating and adopting an Image & Identity Plan to provide guidance on the appropriate locations for wayfinding and gateway signage, as well as signage design standards. In addition, the plan can inform the design on gateway features to maintain a cohesive theme throughout the City.

The City should work with the Parks & Recreation Department to install wayfinding signage along trails and greenways to improve access to Ardmore’s natural features and outdoor recreation. Wayfinding signage can encourage residents and visitors to engage in healthy, physical activity not only by providing information about the trails and greenways to those who may be interested, but also by bringing increased attention to their existence.

The abandoned Frisco Railroad provides opportunities for both local and regional trails. Locally, a rail-to-trail along the Frisco Railroad could connect to Downtown Ardmore to bring additional greenspace to the City core. Regionally, there may be potential for a trail that could extend from Ranglin to Lake Texoma, passing right through the City of Ardmore.

Finally, the City should amend the UDC to require developers to contribute to the construction and maintenance of trails. For example, developers who are developing beside a designated or planned trail should contribute to a certain percentage of the trail’s construction and/or maintenance cost. This will aid in the expansion and maintenance of Ardmore’s trail network for years to come.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The City can pursue the following actions to ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible and easy to find:

» Create and adopt an Image & Identity Plan to provide guidance on the appropriate locations for wayfinding and gateway signage, as well as signage design standards.

» Create pedestrian and bicycle trails along Rockford Road and 12th Avenue to better link the City with public parks.

» Create a pedestrian and bicycle trail linking Southwest Park with existing bicycle routes in the Downtown.

» Install cohesive wayfinding signage along existing bicycle routes from Veterans Boulevard to Lake Murray Drive to improve non-motorized access to parks and recreation facilities.

» Work with the Parks & Recreation Department to install wayfinding signage along trails and greenways to improve access to Ardmore’s natural features and outdoor recreation.

» Consider a rail-to-trail development along the “Frisco” Railroad right-of-way, an overgrown, abandoned rail corridor that traverses through the east side of the City and connects with the Downtown.

» Explore the potential for a regional trail along the Frisco Railroad with the BNFS, DOT, the Southern Oklahoma Development Association, the Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments, and other neighboring communities.

» Convert unused, unmaintained alleys into connected trails for residential areas.

» Amend the UDC to require developers to contribute to the construction and maintenance of trails.
Open spaces and natural resources are vital assets to the Ardmore community. Open space is comprised of environmental features such as wetlands, floodplain, lakes, rivers, reservoirs, and forest, all of which help to define Ardmore’s character; promote community and environmental health; and support local wildlife. Ardmore’s quality of life and environmental integrity is directly impacted by the health and preservation of open space areas. To maintain healthy, high quality open spaces and natural resources, the City should play a key role in open space identification and preservation.

Wetlands
Ardmore contains approximately 1,368 acres of wetlands, which appear to be evenly distributed around the City core. Wetlands are lands that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support vegetation and animals adapted for life in such conditions. Examples include marshes, swamps, bogs, and fens. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat and have the potential to filter water of impurities, recycle nutrients, and capture rainwater. The United States has a history of wetland loss and degradation. Preserving and restoring wetlands through collaboration among private conservation organizations, local governments, and state governments is crucial in maintaining the health of Ardmore’s natural features and ensuring their existence for future generations.

The City should work to protect wetlands from development by requiring vegetative buffers around wetlands in the UDC. Establishing buffer requirements around wetlands can help protect wetlands from the negative impacts of development. In addition, vegetative buffers will minimize soil erosion, sedimentation, and flooding during heavy rains, while providing wildlife habitat and healthy ecosystems.

Wetlands provide a unique opportunity for students to engage with the environment and learn about its various ecosystems. The City should encourage the Ardmore School District to offer educational field trips to wetland sites. Integrating field trips to wetland sites with biology, ecology, and/or environmental science classes in Ardmore Public Schools will help foster environmental stewardship and spark interest in the natural sciences among students.

The City should establish volunteer opportunities in wetland management and restoration. Creating a program that coordinates volunteer opportunities for the management and restoration of wetlands can increase awareness of the importance of wetlands through community involvement. Volunteers can assist in the installation of vegetative buffers around wetlands in need, as well as the removal of invasive species, such as the invasive cattail (Typha angustifolia).

RECOMMENDATIONS
The City can help protect and restore its wetlands through the following actions:

- Amend the UDC to establish appropriate setback and vegetative buffer requirements around wetlands to protect wetlands from the negative impacts of development.
- Encourage Ardmore Public Schools to integrate field trips to wetland sites with their curriculum.
- Organize a program that coordinates volunteer opportunities in wetland management and restoration.
LAKES, RIVERS & RESERVOIRS

Lakes, rivers, and reservoirs are significant environmental features in Ardmore, as they provide opportunities for recreation such as swimming, fishing, and boating. Many of Ardmore’s public parks include lake access. For example, Regional Park, one of the community’s greatest assets, partially surrounds City Lake. Ensuring the protection of the City’s lakes, rivers, and reservoirs and improving their access is essential to the health and well-being of the community at large.

Creating and connecting greenways, trails, and bicycle paths linking the City to its lakes, rivers, and reservoirs will encourage residents to use Ardmore’s water features and promote healthy, physical activity by encouraging residents to walk, jog, or cycle to these destinations as opposed to driving. Linkages should be prioritized in existing, underserved residential areas, such as in the southwest, southeast, and northern residential neighborhoods surrounding the City core.

Partnering with organizations to maintain healthy aquatic ecosystems is vital to preserving water features for Ardmore’s future generations to enjoy. Rivers, lakes, and reservoirs serve as diverse habitats for a variety of organisms. To maintain the health of these ecosystems, the City should continue to work with the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department, as well as other organizations aimed at protecting the environment. The City should also capitalize on its water access by involving the Ardmore School District and private recreation providers to establish educational, water-based recreational facilities, programs, and activities that residents and students are able to become involved in.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can protect, enhance, and promote the use of its lakes, rivers, and reservoirs by pursuing the following steps:

- Explore creating a continuous greenway linking City Lake with Lake Murray.
- Continue working with the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Department to regularly review and monitor the quality of water and health of aquatic ecosystems.
- Work with the Ardmore School District and private recreation providers to establish educational, water-based recreational facilities and activities.
- Establish and promote recycling, composting, and water conservation programs for residents to become involved in, such as offering tax credits on stormwater bills for residents who create rain gardens, install permeable parking lots, or use rain barrels.
FLOODPLAIN

There are approximately 3,286 acres of floodplain throughout Ardmore. The floodplain consists of areas of land that are susceptible to being overcome by floodwaters. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which regulates development activities in the floodplain, and encourages local governments to adopt higher standards for floodplain development. Generally, development in the floodplain should be prohibited to reduce public funds used in relief efforts.

Developing within the floodplain is a risk, as damages that result from frequent flooding can be costly for property owners, developers, and the City alike. To minimize this risk, the City should amend the UDC to prohibit new development in the floodplain. In addition, requiring developers to install vegetative buffers along the floodplain will protect it by minimizing soil erosion and reducing sedimentation. In addition, buffers can protect existing nearby development by managing flooding during heavy rains.

Existing development may stand in close proximity to the floodplain, which can cause problems with flooding and erosion. The City should encourage property owners and developers to install deep-rooted, native, perennial landscaping and permeable pavers to minimize flooding in developed and redevelopment areas. To preserve and restore ecosystems in and around the floodplain, the City can daylight buried floodways and enhance them with native landscaping. Daylighting and restoring buried floodways will increase wildlife habitat and beautify the community. In addition, daylighting and restoring buried floodways can mitigate flooding and improve water quality by reinstating water flow and purifying the environment through increased infiltration. Daylighting can be expensive, but grant programs do exist for stream and river restoration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can protect its existing and future development from flooding and preserve and enhance the floodplain with the following steps:

» Amend the UDC to prohibit new development in the floodplain.

» Amend the UDC to require appropriate setbacks and vegetative buffering around creeks and floodways to minimize incidences of flooding and soil erosion, reduce sedimentation, and improve water quality.

» Encourage property owners and developers to install green infrastructure (i.e., rain gardens, pervious asphalt, permeable pavers) in areas with existing development and planned redevelopment to mitigate flooding.

» Where possible, beautify and restore Ardmore’s creeks through native landscaping, the removal of concrete channelization and chain linked fencing, and daylighting (i.e., restore the channelized creek across Rockford Road).
TREES

Trees play a vital role in shaping the community’s quality of life. In addition to beautifying the streetscape and providing wildlife habitat, tree canopies aid in providing shade, absorbing rainwater, and improving air quality. To ensure the continuation of these natural services, it is important to protect and increase Ardmore’s urban tree supply.

Prior to the implementation of the following recommendations, the City should ensure that the UDC contains a diverse list of native tree species, as well as an invasive plant list. The City should review and update its species list in Article IX, City Tree Board, Sec. 2-163.5 and Sec. 2-164, of the UDC. The UDC should also stress that the installation of invasive tree species should be prohibited.

The City should create a tree preservation ordinance to ensure that the City is comprised of a diverse mix of young, medium-aged, and mature trees of different species. This will enhance the tree population’s resiliency to disease and the negative impacts of climate change. In addition, the tree preservation ordinance can be enforced during the replacement and installation of trees during streetscape improvements.

In its present state, Ardmore’s urban tree supply can be improved. The City should enhance its streetscape by increasing its urban tree population as it implements streetscape improvements. In its present state, Ardmore’s urban tree supply can be improved. The City should enhance its streetscape by increasing its urban tree population as it implements streetscape improvements.

In its present state, Ardmore’s urban tree supply can be improved. The City should enhance its streetscape by increasing its urban tree population as it implements streetscape improvements. Tree planting should be site-appropriate to ensure their survival, maintain required lines of sight for safe pedestrian and vehicular movement, and prevent damages to public infrastructure. Trees should be properly spaced and maintained to keep them healthy and prolong their lifespans. Where feasible, the City should also amend the UDC to require the installation of trees in parkways and around parking lots for new developments. Requiring developers to install trees around parking lots will provide screening and improve the aesthetics of the surrounding area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City can enhance and increase its urban tree population through the following actions:

- Review and update the species list in Article IX of the UDC to ensure that it contains a diverse list of native tree species and invasive plant species.
- Amend the UDC to clearly state the prohibition of planting invasive tree species.
- Create a tree preservation ordinance to ensure that the City is comprised of a diverse mix of young, medium-aged, and mature trees of various species.
- Increase the urban tree population by planting trees along the streetscape as streetscape improvements are implemented.
- Develop a street-tree program to expand and maintain the City’s tree canopy by planting new trees and replacing dying trees.
- Where feasible, amend the UDC to require the installation of trees in parkways and around parking lots for new developments.
- Amend the UDC to encourage the preservation of mature trees with new development.
OPEN SPACE & NEW GROWTH

OPEN SPACE DEDICATIONS
As Ardmore experiences development within its Tier 2 and 3 Growth Areas, it is important that developers set aside land for parks and recreation. Access to parks and open space are vital in shaping the community’s health and wellbeing. The City should create standards for integrating open space into developments in an accessible manner, including ensuring trails and sidewalks are connected to parkland.

CONSERVATION DESIGN
Conservation design, also known as conservation development, protects an area’s natural features through the preservation of open space, farmland, and natural habitats for wildlife. Conservation design usually dedicates a minimum percentage of the total developable parcel as open space through partnerships between land-use conservation organizations, private property owners, and the local government. Land that is set aside can be held by a conservation organization or protected by a conservation easement, and design features, such as low-impact stormwater management systems and landscape design, can be implemented to reduce some of the negative impacts. Benefits of conservation design include:» Creating neighborhood or community parkland for its surrounding residents; » Providing stormwater management while minimizing the amount of roadway and utility infrastructure and associated costs needed to serve a given development; and » Incentivizing developers to build at a higher density to preserve open space.

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT
Cluster development is an approach to residential development that preserves contiguous areas of open space and natural areas by clustering smaller residential parcels on the site. The same number of homes are developed while a higher density may be applied through the reduction of lot sizes, relaxed setback requirements, and incentives (i.e. density bonuses). Benefits of cluster development include:

» Providing stormwater management while minimizing the amount of roadway and utility infrastructure and associated costs needed to serve a given development; and
» Incentivizing developers to build at a higher density to preserve open space.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS
Through the United States Department of Agriculture, the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) enables the Oklahoma Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to acquire or provide funding for the acquisition and conservation of easements to protect natural resources. Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between the landowner and a land trust to permanently limit uses of the land. The land trust will oversee the terms of the conservation easement, and land covered by the easement remains in ownership by the landowner. In addition, easement “run with the land,” which means that they exist in perpetuity, regardless of changes in ownership. The benefits of conservation easements include:

» Preserving natural, scenic, or open-space values of real property; » Ensuring the availability of land for agricultural, forest, recreational, or open-space uses; » Protecting natural resources; and » Maintaining and enhancing air or water quality.

LAND DONATIONS
Property owners may donate land to a land trust “fee-simple,” and the land trust will maintain and preserve the land based on its conservation value and the land donor’s intentions. The landowner may decide whether they would like to include residential home sites in the donation, as well as whether they would like to establish a “reserved life estate,” that allows residents to continue living on their property for the duration of their lifetimes.

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION & ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES
City of Ardmore Comprehensive Plan

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The City of Ardmore must take a proactive role in implementing the recommendations, strategies, and policies of the Comprehensive Plan in order to realize the community’s vision for the City’s future. Through the active cooperation of elected and appointed officials, City staff, public agencies, developers, the local business community, property owners, and residents, the City will be able to efficiently facilitate change and growth over the next 20 years.

DAILY USE
The Ardmore Comprehensive Plan should be regularly consulted as the official policy guide for land use, development, and community improvements by City staff, City Council, the Planning Commission, and other boards and commissions. Additionally, service providers and partner organizations should consult the Plan as they pursue developing new facilities, infrastructure, and programming. The following actions should be taken to further educate the community and ensure the Plan’s daily usage:

- Provide a free and accessible copy of the Plan online;
- Explain the Plan and its relationship to private and public development projects and other proposals as appropriate;
- Assist the City Council as well as other boards and commissions in the Plan’s routine administration, interpretation, and application;
- Explain the purpose, importance, and benefits of the Plan to key department heads and City officials; and
- Maintain an up-to-date list of current possible amendments, needs, or issues that may require changes, additions, or deletion from the Plan and actively coordinate with and assist in the Plan amendment process.

REGULAR UPDATES
It is important to note that the Ardmore Comprehensive Plan is not a static document. The Plan should be updated on a regular basis to ensure that the document remains relevant to community needs and aspirations, reflecting the changes in community desires and new issues that may arise. Although proposals to amend the Comprehensive Plan may be introduced by petition at any time, the City should review the Plan on an annual basis if possible. At the very least, the City should review the Plan every two to three years. Systematic review should coincide with the preparation of the annual budget and capital improvement program to ensure that recommendations and projects can be considered as part of the upcoming commitments for that fiscal year.

PARTNERSHIPS
Successful implementation of the Ardmore Comprehensive Plan will require dedicated partnerships between the City, public agencies, and the private sector. As an active leader in implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the City should regularly communicate and look for opportunities to partner with various community stakeholders. Partnerships should be maintained and sought out with the following entities:

- Public agencies, such as ODOT and Neighborhood Planning Councils
- Ardmore, Dickson, Plainview, and Springer school districts
- Institute for Agricultural Bioscience
- University Center of Southern Oklahoma
- Southern Oklahoma Technology Center (SOTC)
- Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM
The best way to ensure the successful implementation of the Ardmore Comprehensive Plan is through careful coordination of financial resources. For example, including the Plan’s recommendations and projects within the City’s Capital Improvement Program will allow the City to carefully implement various recommendations, projects, and improvements while staying within the City’s budget. For example, larger scale recommendations, such as major roadway projects, can span over multiple years. Referring to the Ardmore Comprehensive Plan when developing the City’s Capital Improvement Program will allow City staff and officials to carefully plan for the funding of larger recommendations and spread out their costs to minimize economic burden.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION
Public communication and engagement was a vital element of the planning process, and significantly influenced the Plan’s development. Community members were able to stay engaged through various workshops, outreach events, DIY workshop kits, a project website, interactive outreach tools, and other traditional media. Although this was a critical step in building the community’s understanding of the Plan and the City’s role in the planning process, the City should continue these efforts to ensure that the entire community understands the Plan’s vision and recommendations. Keeping the community engaged by covering major milestones and regular updates will be an essential part of this endeavor. Accessible materials that simplify and explain civic functions, such as guidance on applying for zoning, building, subdivision, and other development-related permits and approvals, should be provided to the public both online and in print. In addition, the City should provide opportunities for residents to voice their opinions and establish avenues for community members to communicate with City staff and receive information about local planning and development. The City should develop a system to ensure that resident questions and concerns are heard and addressed in a timely manner.
POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The discussion of potential funding sources that follows includes potential funding sources that the City of Ardmore should pursue as it begins implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The following funding sources are subject to change over time, so it is important that the City continue to research and monitor grants, funding agencies, and programs to identify deadlines, requirements, and new opportunities as they become available. Funding opportunities are grouped into the four categories: 1) general economic development, 2) culture and arts, 3) transportation and infrastructure, and 4) parks, recreation, and open space.

GENERAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AMERICAN RECOVERY & REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act aims to create and save jobs, jump-start the economy, and build the foundation for long-term economic growth. The Act includes measures to modernize infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, increase access to healthcare, and more. This act specifies appropriations for a wide range of funding categories, such as budget stabilization, business and employment, education and research, energy and environment, health and human services, housing and assistance, local government, public safety, and transportation.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POOLED FINANCING

Economic development pooled financing available to local governments in conjunction with a for-profit entity for economic development projects. To obtain this funding, infrastructure assets must be owned by the local government. This incentive targets business expansion projects which include job creation and significant investment in facilities, machinery, and equipment. The Oklahoma Community Economic Development Pooled Finance Incentive is comprised of two funding options, the Company-Purchased Debt and Public Finance, both of which involve a for-profit entity working with local government(s) to participate in a competitive application process to the Oklahoma Department of Commerce to obtain funds and working through the approval process of the Oklahoma Development Finance Authority (ODFA) to finalize incentive agreements. For both options, debt issued may be paid from withholding taxes and other revenue at the benefiting for-profit. Company-Purchased Debt takes the form of annual cash payments (due on a Promissory Note issued by the ODFA) from the State of Oklahoma, and Public Finance takes the form of cash proceeds from the sale of private bonds less the cost of issuance.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING (EDIF) PROGRAM

Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs) are available for infrastructure improvements necessary for new and expanding industries. Up to $300,000 is available for grants and up to $400,000 for low interest loans.

ENTERPRISE ZONES

Enterprise Zones have the potential to create jobs and improve facilities. Businesses within Enterprise Zones can receive state tax credits on income and sales taxes and for real property improvements, grants for creating jobs, and other state and local incentives for job creation. The Ardmore Industrial Airport, New Horizons Industrial Park, and Westport Industrial Park are in Enterprise Zones.

FACE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Facade Improvement Programs offer low interest loans or grants earmarked for improving the exterior appearance of designated properties. A facade improvement program provides financial and technical assistance to owners that invest in the aesthetics of their property, which can aid in the retention of existing businesses as well as attracting new businesses to the area. This program is targeted at existing buildings that may look deteriorated or outdated. Such programs are often credited with sparking revitalization in downtowns and commercial corridors. Programs may be funded through Community Development Block Grant funds or Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts. Properties that are current on municipal taxes and The Ardmore Initiative assessment are eligible to apply for a 50 percent matching reimbursement grant of up to $5,000 in the Downtown Ardmore Business District.

5-YEAR PROPERTY TAX ABATEMENT

A five-year ad valorem tax exemption is available for new, expanded, or acquired (unoccupied for one-year period prior to acquisition) properties, including, manufacturing, research/development, some computer services, data processing services, and some distribution services. Real estate, and machinery and equipment used directly in the manufacturing processes, are also eligible. The exemption requires a minimum capital investment of $250,000 for all facilities and an additional $250,000 in annual payroll.
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BONDS
Industrial development bonds assist private companies in financing their industrial ventures. These bonds are tax exempt loans for land, buildings, and other equipment. These loans are only available to small businesses and can only be used for manufacturing projects.

OKLAHOMA CAPITAL INVESTMENT BOARD
The Oklahoma Capital Investment Board works to launch Oklahomans as venture capitalists and draw in outside venture firms. Through its venture capital program, the Oklahoma Capital Investment Board (OCIB) facilitates investment in venture capital funds that focus on investing in quality companies.

OKLAHOMA INDUSTRIAL FINANCE AUTHORITY
The Oklahoma Industrial Finance Authority, a constitutional authority with the responsibility of assisting and aiding Oklahoma’s industrial development, makes loans to the Ardmore Development Authority, who can then re-loan funds to a company. Up to 66 percent of the cost of land, buildings and fixed equipment (a maximum of $2 million) can be loaned to manufacturers. The Credit Enhancement Reserve fund strengthens the credit of revenue bonds issued by the Oklahoma Development Finance Authority, which in turn strengthens the credit of revenue bonds issued for loans to Oklahoma businesses. These bonds are tax exempt at the state level and may also be federally tax exempt.

PUBLIC TRUST FINANCING
Oklahoma authorizes public trust financing for economic development purposes. The Ardmore Development Authority, a public trust, has successfully completed many non-recourse bonds for industry.

SMALL BUSINESS LINKED DEPOSIT PROGRAM
The Small Business Linked Deposit Program provides loans of up to $1 million to small businesses, and up to $6 million to eligible industrial parks, at reduced interest rates through investment in eligible lending institutions.

TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)
Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is used to assist funding the redevelopment of areas within a community which qualify as blighted, in need of conservation, or located in an area prioritized for economic development. Incremental tax dollars from a new investment can be used to fund infrastructure, streetscaping, public improvements, land assembly, and offset other development-related costs.

CULTURE & ARTS
CULTURAL DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
The Cultural District Development Program, a component of the Oklahoma Cultural District Initiative, provides grant funding, guidance, and professional consultation to assist in the creation of cultural districts in Oklahoma communities. Grants of up to $7,500 per year are available to applicants and require a 1:1 cash match, of which 50 percent of the match may be in-kind support. Applicants can participate for up to five years and receive a maximum of $25,000 in funding. Qualifying organizations are Oklahoma non-religious, non-profit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, local and tribal governments, public libraries, public school districts, colleges and universities.

TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE
CONGESTION MITIGATION & AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ)
The CMAQ program supports surface transportation projects that provide potential solutions to congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types have included transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle/pedestrian projects and projects that result in emissions reductions. In the past, these projects have been federally funded at 80 percent of project costs.
MOBILITY ON DEMAND (MOD) SANDBOX PROGRAM
The FTA announced funding for Mobility on Demand public transportation projects in October, 2016. This program is a part of the larger Department of Transportation research effort in support of transit agencies and communities in pursuit of a transportation system that focuses on Mobility on Demand (MOD). MOD projects help to create a more efficient and accessible transportation system through the integration of tools such as smart phone apps, bike- and car-sharing, demand-responsive bus and van services, technologically enhanced transportation infrastructure, and more. As of October 2016, a total of $8 million was allocated through the FTA’s Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment program authority. Although the deadline has passed for project selections, it is important to note this funding opportunity as these projects are becoming increasingly desirable nationally and internationally, meaning that there will likely be a major increase in funding opportunities for such endeavors (i.e., Smart City Challenges).

FIXING AMERICAN’S SURFACE TRANSPORTATION (FAST) ACT
The FAST Act, a five-year transportation reauthorization bill, was established in December 2015 as a replacement for the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act. The FAST Act, which is implemented and administered by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), aims to improve infrastructure, provide long-term certainty and increased flexibility for states and local governments, streamline project approval processes, and encourage innovation to make the surface transportation system safer and more efficient. It authorizes $305 billion through 2020 for highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, motor carrier safety, rail, public transportation, hazardous materials safety, and technology, research, and statistics programs. The City should monitor the FAST Act as application occurs to determine the full extent of funding changes and implementation.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)
The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides grant money to transit agencies as well as competitive discretionary funding. The FTA partners with state and local governments to help them create and enhance their public transportation systems. The City of Ardmore should investigate the use of FTA funds for transit endeavors, such as buses, light rail, and commuter rail.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL PROGRAM (SRTS)
The Safe Routes to School Program (SRTS), which is administered through ODOT, is a reimbursement program in which a proposed project must be selected, approved, programmed, and contracted with the ODOT. Eligible SRTS applicants include state and local governments, tribal and regional agencies, non-profit organizations, schools, and school districts. SRTS aims to enable and encourage children of all abilities to be able to safely walk and bicycle to school. The program focuses on facilitating the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety while reducing traffic, fuel consumption, and air pollution in the vicinity of schools.

PARKS, RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND (LWCF)
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act, enacted in 1964, established a funding source for both Federal acquisition of authorized national park, conservation and recreation areas and for grants to state and local government to help them acquire, develop, and improve outdoor recreation areas. Administered by the National Park Service (NPS), the LWCF assists in preserving, developing and assuring accessibility to outdoor recreation resources for all citizens of the United States of present and future generations. Areas funded through LWCF grants must be maintained for recreation use in perpetuity to ensure that funded areas will be available for present as well as future generations.

The program encourages conservation of key open spaces, such as riverfronts, forests, and wetlands, and generally requires that lands purchased with grants be made accessible to the public for appropriate recreation uses. From Oklahoma’s allocation of LWCF funds, 50/50 matching grants are offered to eligible applicants for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation projects. Eligible expenses must be paid by the project sponsor prior to being reimbursed with grant funds at 50 percent. Approved projects and eligible developments for reimbursement must be completed within a two-year time frame.

The project should be in accordance with Oklahoma’s Statewide Conservation Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The SCORP identifies statewide conservation and recreational needs and devises a program to meet these needs. However, a locally-based master plan that identifies the current project as an outdoor recreational need for the community can override the SCORP. The relevant portion of the master plan should be included with the grant application.