

**Category: 2007 Kansas Planning Awards –  
Pioneer Award (Urban) Category Submission**

**Name of Project**

*The Central Northeast Area Plan Update 2005*

**Nominee**

*The Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department*

**Nominator**

*David Barber AICP, Advanced Plans Manager*

**KS APA Criteria**

**Planning Solution-**

In the mid 1990's, citizens of central northeast Wichita working with City staff developed a proposed plan that would address critical revitalization issues facing their community. The Plan contained over 90 recommended strategies supporting community redevelopment and revitalization in the low-moderate income neighborhoods located in central northeast Wichita. Although the Wichita City Council never adopted this plan for unspecified political reasons, neighborhood leaders saw how relevant this type of planning effort was to addressing issues facing the central northeast area. In late 2004, several neighborhood representatives desiring redevelopment and revitalization successes in central northeast Wichita contacted the City Council Member for District I with an interest in revisiting the 1995 planning effort.

In early January 2005, the City began working with a 22 member Steering Committee comprised of key area stakeholders and neighborhood association representatives to evaluate the relevance of the goals outlined in the 1995 plan, and to identify priorities and action items for future implementation. A total of 12 neighborhood associations and four not-for-profit community development organizations were represented on the Steering Committee. The Plan area is bounded irregularly by Mosley on the west; Kellogg, Hillside and Central on the south; Edgemoor, Pinecrest, Parkwood, Old Manor, and Oliver on the east; and 21<sup>st</sup>, Hillside and the UPRR on the north.

**Creative yet Practical-**

As an alternative to preparing individual neighborhood plans, this area neighborhood planning approach created an action-oriented plan and toolbox for the central northeast area neighborhood associations to address their shared concerns. Not only was this more efficient and effective from a professional planner's perspective, this approach also served to build area capacity for positive change and unify individual neighborhoods through the creation of the 'Central Northeast Area Council of Neighborhood Associations'. This has resulted in a single, more powerful community voice in addressing neighborhood concerns in the area.

A total of eleven Steering Committee meetings and two public meetings were held in the process of reviewing and updating the Plan. This has resulted in a plan with broad-based neighborhood support, support from the active neighborhood associations, and support from

City officials. The Central Northeast Area Plan Update was adopted by the Wichita City Council and the Sedgwick County Board of Commissioners as an element of the Wichita-Sedgwick County Comprehensive Plan in September 2005.

The Plan contains an existing conditions assessment, a progress report on neighborhood change, a long-term vision statement, 11 plan priority areas and a total of 43 detailed action initiatives. The vision statement for the Plan addresses a broad range of physical, social and economic issues impacting neighborhood. Based upon this over-arching vision statement, the Plan is divided into the following 11 priority areas: Increase Neighborhood Capacity; Housing Repair; Neighborhood Clean-Up; Neighborhood Watch and Community Safety; Enhanced Neighborhood Shopping Opportunities; Retain and Attract New Businesses and Jobs; Improve Quality of Life for Area Children; Promote New Home Construction; Initiate a Neighborhood and Personal Pride Campaign; Improve Neighborhood Infrastructure; Improve Area Recreational Opportunities.

The Plan has a user-friendly, easy to read format with excellent support graphics, resource and reference materials, and maps. The Plan is a practical toolbox with many elements that can be implemented at the grass roots, neighborhood level, without dependency upon local or state government leadership. Many of the neighborhood issues and concerns addressed in the Central Northeast Area Plan Update are shared by other inner city neighborhoods in Wichita. With minor modification and customization, a number of the action-oriented initiatives contained in this Plan have been adapted to other neighborhoods as appropriate. The Plan has also served as a proto-type for more recent neighborhood plans prepared by the City.

The first key initiative of the Plan to be implemented directly by neighborhood stakeholders was the formation of the Central Northeast Area Council of Neighborhood Associations. Meeting once a month, this council coordinates and oversees the implementation of the Plan initiatives, and serves as a united voice for area neighborhood associations. The adoption of the Plan in 2005 has also been a catalyst for the development of several major city-led revitalization initiatives in central northeast Wichita, including the city's 'Stop Blight' program, the 'Beat 44' policing initiative, and most recently the New Communities Initiative (a pilot revitalization partnership involving local, state, federal and private sector interests).

### **Letters of Support**

See attachments