



**CITY OF TOPEKA  
LAND USE & GROWTH  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**2040**

**APPROVED:**  
TOPEKA PLANNING COMMISSION, OCTOBER 20, 2014  
Topeka Governing Body, March 10, 2015



**LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN 2040 ADOPTED:**

Topeka Planning Commission	October 20, 2015
Topeka Governing Body	March 10, 2015

---

**AMENDMENTS SINCE ADOPTION:**

1. **SE 6<sup>th</sup> Ave/St. Mixed Use Employment Corridor (CPA 16/1) – Future Land Use Section 5 (pg. 52) and Map #3**

Topeka Planning Commission – December 19, 2016

Topeka Governing Body – January 10, 2017



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

**City of Topeka Mayor**

Larry Wolgast

**Topeka City Council**

TJ Brown	Michelle De La Isla	Denise Everhart
Richard Harmon	Karen Hiller	Chad Manspeaker
Sylvia Ortiz	Nathan Schmidt	Elaine Schwartz

**Topeka Planning Commission**

Kevin Beck, Chairman

Patrick Woods	Dustin Crook
Michelle Cuevas-Stubblefield	Scott Gales, Vice-Chairman
Dennis Haugh	Nicholas Jefferson
Carole Jordan	Mike Lackey

**Technical Advisory Team**

Mike Lackey	Mike Berry	Ann Adams
Mike Morse	Kevin Holland	Charles Smith
Angela Sharp	Nancy Seitz	Doug Whitacre
Jim Kaup	Christy Caldwell	Curtis Sneden
Grant Sourk	Don Rankin	

**Topeka Planning Department**

Bill Fiander, AICP, Director  
Dan Warner, AICP, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
Annie Driver, AICP, Planner II  
Tim Paris, Planner II  
Susan Hanzlik, AICP CNU-A, Planner I  
Kris Wagers, Office Specialist



# Table of Contents

<b>I. Introduction/Purpose</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Process .....	1
<b>II. Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Trends .....	3
Vision .....	3
Pillars .....	4
Major Recommendations .....	5
Measurables .....	5
<b>III. Background</b> .....	<b>6</b>
LUGMP – 2025 Review .....	6
Population Expectations .....	8
Low Density Development Pattern .....	9
Unbalanced Investment .....	10
Population Leakage .....	14
Topeka Profile Summary .....	17
<b>IV. Growth Management</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Overall Goals .....	19
Topeka Urban Growth Area (UGA) Policies .....	20
Topeka Non-UGA Area Policies .....	28
Annexation Policies .....	32
Wastewater Management Policies .....	34
<b>V. Land Use</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Model Neighborhood .....	36
Future Land Use .....	43
<b>VI. Implementation Summary</b> .....	<b>55</b>
<b>VII. Comprehensive Plan Updates and Amendment Process</b> .....	<b>57</b>
Types of Plans .....	57
Timing .....	58
Procedures and Criteria .....	58

## Maps and Figures

Map 1: Urban Growth Area and Service Tiers .....	30
Map 2: Non-UGA Area .....	31
Map 3: Future Land Use .....	54
Figure 1: Topeka and Shawnee County Population (1960 – 2010).....	7
Figure 2: Comprehensive Plan Population Projections.....	8
Figure 3: Topeka Land Area and Population Trends .....	9
Figure 4: Topeka, Lawrence, and Manhattan Historical Population Densities.....	10
Figure 5: Quarter Section Development .....	11
Figure 6: 1990 – 2013 Residential Building & Demolition Permits .....	12
Figure 7: Infrastructure Outside Topeka.....	13
Figure 8: City of Topeka Neighborhood Health 2011 .....	14
Figure 9: Topeka’s Share of County Population (1860 – 2010).....	15
Figure 10: City/County Share of Population (Topeka/Shawnee and Lawrence/Douglas).....	16
Figure 11: Topeka Profile Summary.....	17
Figure 12: UGA Development Standards Example .....	22
Figure 13: Currently Vacant Platted Residential Parcels Since 1970 .....	25
Figure 14: 2040 Population Distribution by Service Tier .....	25
Figure 15: Model Neighborhood.....	39
<b>Appendix .....</b>	<b>59</b>

- A. Shawnee County Parcel Size and Urban Growth Area Development
  - Unified School District Boundaries
  - Annexation Program Map
  - Primary Service Area from Previously Adopted Wastewater Management Plans
  - Public Comments Summary
  - Summary of County Outreach
- B. Subdivision Regulation Changes (3/10/15)
- C. Utility Regulation Changes (3/10/15)



## I. Introduction/Purpose

Topeka Municipal Code Section 18.05.010 states the Topeka Planning Commission shall be responsible for the adoption and recommendation to the city council of a comprehensive metropolitan plan for the city of Topeka and the city's three-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction. The content, procedures, approval process, and updating of said comprehensive metropolitan plan shall be the same as provided in Kansas Statutes KSA 12-747 and 12-748.

The planning process for the existing Land Use & Growth Management Plan 2025 (LUGMP 2025), an Element of the Comprehensive Plan for Topeka, started when Topeka and Shawnee County were cooperatively planning for the future through the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Near the end of that planning process for the LUGMP 2025, Topeka and Shawnee County created two separate planning commissions. Therefore, the LUGMP 2025 was only adopted by the Topeka City Council on February 24.

The document has been a productive tool for planning Topeka's future growth. It contains major themes, goals, and policies that remain relevant today, such as directing growth on the fringe and the Neighborhood Model. However, like all plans, it is due for update.

Major updates to the Comprehensive Plan should take place every 10 years in order to update data and policies. The updates are necessary due to conditions and circumstances that were unknown at the time of the original adoption and to reflect new assumptions.

The update will build upon the work and recommendations from the 2012 EPA Technical Assistance for Sustainable Communities workshop. During this workshop, the public was invited to offer ideas which could help Topeka improve its economic and fiscal health through land use/growth management practices. One of the key recommendations from the workshop was to **update the City's Comprehensive Plan to incorporate land development and infrastructure policies that align with the City's economic and fiscal health goals.**

The intent of the Land Use and Growth Management Plan 2040 (LUGMP 2040) update is to **refresh, condense and better articulate** growth management, land use, and annexation policies for Topeka, Topeka's Urban Growth Area (UGA), and the 3-mile area; that best advance the fiscal health of the City of Topeka.

### a. Process

The LUGMP 2040 update kicked-off in late 2013 with the Topeka Planning Commission directing planning staff to bring together a Technical Advisory Team that could build upon the recommendations from the EPA workshop. Planning staff met monthly with the Technical Advisory Team throughout the spring and summer of 2014. The Technical Advisory Team worked with planning staff and the Topeka Planning Commission to form the major concepts of the update.

Individual meetings were also held with various special interest groups, such as the Topeka Homebuilders, Chamber of Commerce, Heartland Visioning, and the Shawnee County Planning Commission, in the summer of 2014.

Three community information meetings were held in September of 2014 to present the draft concepts to the public. The update was included on Topeka's web page along with a number of questions that were posted using Topeka's MindMixer tool. Those questions provided opportunities for individuals to comment and provide feedback on various elements of the update.

The individual and public meetings were vital as input from these stakeholders helped refine the major concepts of the update.

The Topeka Planning Commission reviewed updates for the LUGMP 2040 throughout the summer and fall of 2014, including a discussion of the first draft on September 29, 2014. The Topeka Planning Commission unanimously approved the Plan at a public hearing on October 20, 2014.

Additional public outreach meetings occurred with county residents following the Topeka Planning Commission public hearing. An informational meeting was held with county Township boards and two additional informational meetings were held county property owners. These meetings were helpful to answer questions and dispel some misinformation about the update.

Information about the Plan update was presented to the Topeka Governing Body at meetings on October 21, 2014 and February 17, 2015. The Topeka Governing Body reviewed and approved the Plan on March 10, 2015.

## II. Executive Summary

### a. Trends

The Background Chapter describes trends that help frame this update. These trends provide an important snapshot of the issues that are influencing Topeka's growth pattern. The following is a summary of the trends identified in the Background Chapter:

#### **Population Leakage**

There are a lower proportion of residents to share the cost of services through property taxes.

#### **Low Density Sprawl**

It is more costly to provide services to a low density sprawl land use pattern.

#### **Unbalanced Investment**

There is lower investments in older areas of the city where most needed.

#### **Unplanned Growth**

Plat rules and utility extensions exacerbate urban sprawl putting development ahead of full City service package.

These trends' trajectories **are not fiscally sustainable for the City of Topeka**. Topeka must make changes to **reverse** these trends in order to become a more prosperous community and develop a sustainable fiscal model.

### b. Vision

Future growth for Topeka should be:

#### **Fiscally Responsible**

- Cost-effective with all 5 city services
- Make development decisions that don't fiscally harm the City and its residents.

#### **Sustainable**

- Compact pattern that economically benefits existing population without compromising future needs
- Make choices that are long-lasting and benefit the most people.

#### **Planned**

- Consider many factors and impacts when making land use decisions.
- Ensure development follows public investments that align with the overall goals of this Plan.

### c. Pillars for a Prosperous Community

This update seeks to direct and encourage quality urban growth by promoting the following **Pillars – a.k.a Policies** – of a prosperous community:

- **Compact Development**  
Maintain an efficient shape and footprint at urban densities rather than a low density sprawl or linear pattern.
- **Invest in Place/Add Value Where We Are**  
Fiscally responsible growth happens where Topeka has already invested. Grow value in Topeka's existing neighborhoods with strategic investments and incentives.
- **Return on Investment**  
Topeka's infrastructure and service investments are down payments for the future. It is imperative to develop those areas with existing investments at a level that seeks the greatest return on those initial investments.
- **Urban Development Follows Infrastructure and Happens Inside the City**  
Land use decisions should be made after an area is annexed and investments in infrastructure and services have been made.
- **Connected, Mixed Use, Walkable Neighborhoods**  
Mixing together residential, commercial, and jobs, along with open space and other amenities is to provide a balanced mix of land uses in an efficient and compact pattern. Connected and walkable neighborhoods promote a compact shape and are an amenity for retaining and attracting residents.
- **Focus on Making Topeka a Place People Want to Live First**  
Job seekers often pick a city to live before picking a job. Topeka should be a place where people want to live first.
- **Transportation/Housing Choices**  
Offering complete streets and multi-modal options are important elements for the livability of our community and extending the capacity of our street system. Neighborhoods shouldn't only be low density single-family. There should be a range of housing types built throughout the community.
- **Economic Diversity**  
A diverse economy will help weather economic downturns. Look beyond the traditional large fringe-located manufacturing business to support building up small businesses and entrepreneurs from within Topeka.

These pillars of a prosperous community are intended to ensure that new growth consists of a range of uses and a density that promotes fiscally responsible growth, and that they position the city to attract future population and business generators who will sustain a healthy fiscal model. They should insure that the community **invests in place** as the preferred priority and should not seek to limit new growth, but to **direct growth where the City's services are or where the City can expand service delivery in the most cost-effective manner.**

**d. Major Recommendations**

The following major recommendations are keys for implementing the goals and policies of this Plan.

- Establish an Urban Growth Area (UGA) and Service Tiers to guide compact development in and around Topeka.
- Implement the recommended 20-acre minimum lot standard.
- Continue to require annexation for utility service, but better clarify exemptions.
- Bring forth unilateral annexations that fit UGA policies.

**e. Measurables**

Progress, or lack thereof, should be measurable in the future. How will the following questions be answered the next time this Plan is updated?

1. Is Topeka growing and capturing a greater percentage of population relative to Shawnee County?
2. Is Topeka developing in a more compact and higher density land use pattern?
3. Is Topeka investing more within older areas of the city? Is Neighborhood Health improving?
4. Is Topeka offering more walkable/transportation choices?
5. Have the plat and utility rules been changed to limit rural residential sprawl and protect the Topeka UGA/Non-UGA Area for future urbanization?

### III. Background

#### a. LUGMP 2025

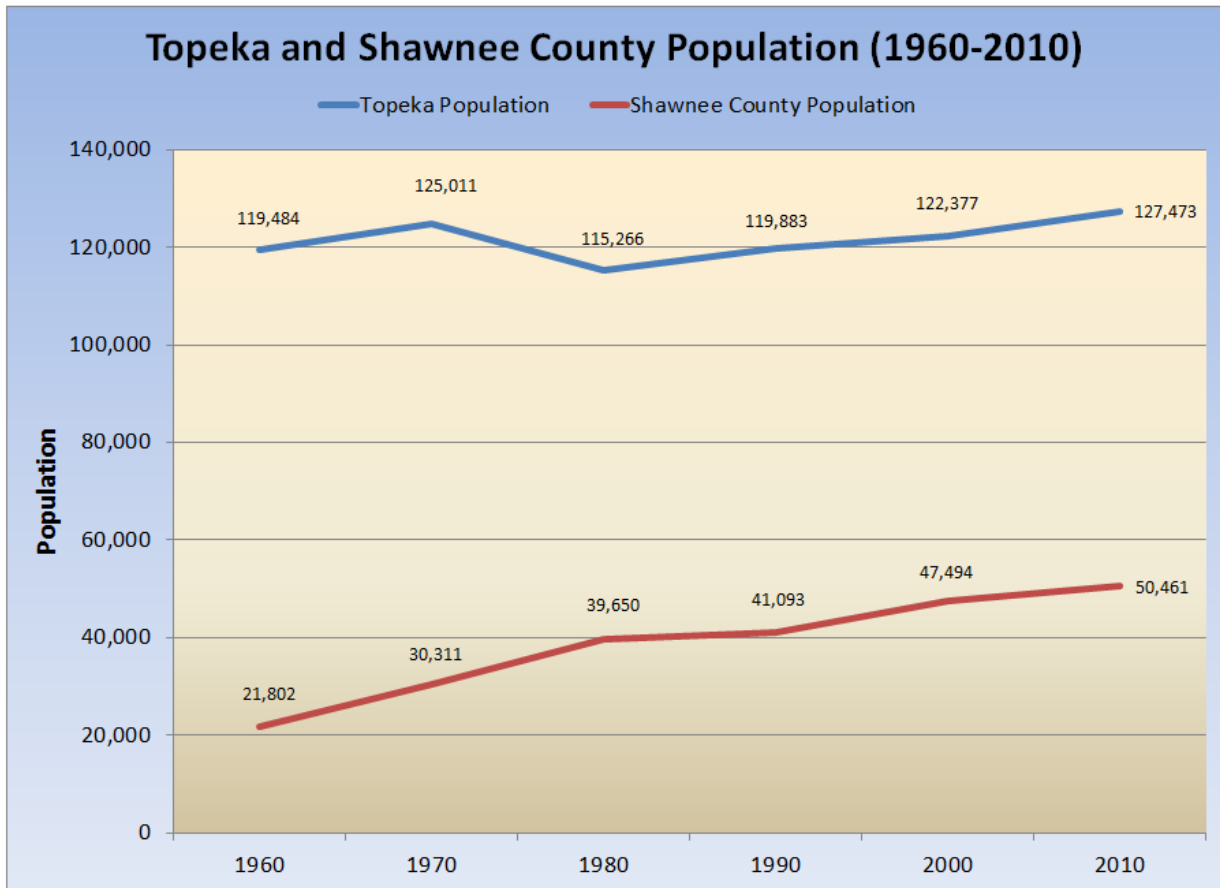
The City of Topeka's Land Use and Growth Management Plan was approved in 2004 with goals and policies extending to the year 2025 (LUGMP 2025). The document produced from this planning effort contained a wealth of information which detailed the current assets of the Topeka area, the issues to address, planning objectives, and the planned future land use pattern for the Topeka Metropolitan Area. The planning objectives outlined what we hoped to achieve; the future land use pattern described how development should occur to make it happen. While all of these considerations and goals shaped the development patterns of the Topeka area, two outcomes from LUGMP 2025 stand out.

*Planned Growth Areas:* These areas provided for orderly growth of the City through expansion of its services outside of its borders into the three-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). This was the first time that Topeka had created Planned Growth Areas in the Comprehensive Plan. This was a good step forward, but there are deficiencies. The Plan lacked direction to distinguish one part of a growth area that was on the far edge versus an area that was contiguous with Topeka. Those areas are effectively treated the same, even though there are major considerations for the City's ability to serve those areas.

Another deficiency is that the residential growth areas are unrealistically large. These growth areas don't promote a compact growth pattern for Topeka. These areas are so large because of the assumed growth rates that were used LUGMP 2025.

*Assumed Growth Rates:* The goals and policies defined in LUGMP- 2025 were based on a projected population growth rate of 1.5% per year; however, the City only grew 0.42% between 2000 and 2010. The Plan was written with the assumption that an additional 95,000 people would be living within the City or its ETJ in the next few decades, which would be 10 times the historical growth rate since 1960.

Figure 1: Topeka and Shawnee County Population (1960 – 2010)



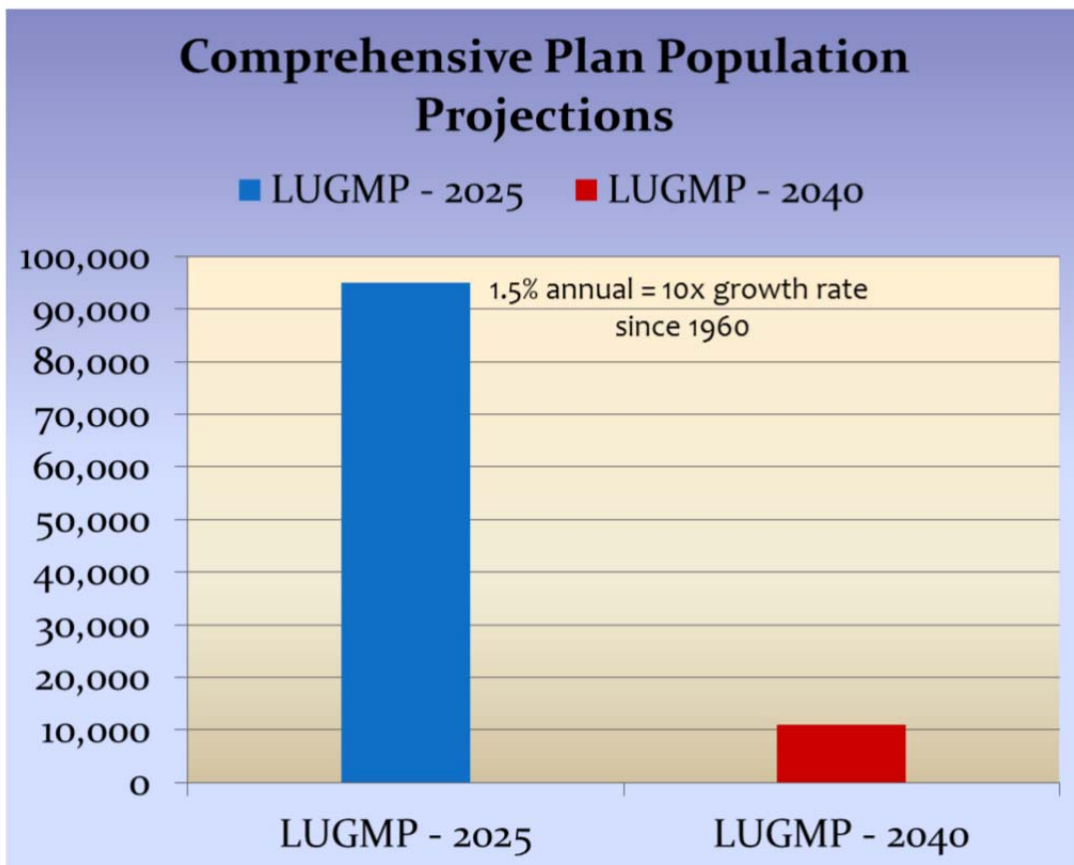
As a result of these robust plan assumptions, the City went a step further to define the growth areas by delineating a smaller Municipal Service Area (MSA) in 2003. The intent was to draw a line that would encompass an area that the City could be expected to serve with municipal services. However, the MSA is more reflective of a Utility Service Area (USA) as it speaks to water and sewer service only and doesn't take into consideration the availability of all 5 City of Topeka service (Fire, Police, water, sewer, and roads). The MSA took a groundbreaking step forward when the City began to require annexation for city water and sewer service outside of Topeka (2003 and updated in 2007).

**b. Population Expectations**

Moving forward, this update will assume a more realistic future population growth rate. This estimate projects population using a Straight Line Regression model based on Topeka’s actual population in 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010. By 2040, Topeka’s population is projected to be 138,852, an increase of 11,379 over the 2010 population of 127,473. See Figure 2 to see how this estimate compares to the LUGMP 2025 projection.

This new growth should be accommodated in a compact manner where Topeka already has made infrastructure and service investments. New lines should be drawn to better reflect the realistic growth rate and a compact development pattern.

Figure 2





**c. Low Density Development Pattern**

Much of Topeka’s growth has been occurring outside of the city’s core in the form of low-density residential development instead of the higher-density typically found within a city. When these areas were annexed, Topeka was annexing more land than people. The overall city population density decreased (Figure 3) while the total land area skyrocketed (Figure 3). The land area increased by 65% compared to the 7% population increase during this time (approximately 30% of the land area annexed was industrial parks and the Wanamaker commercial corridor). Figure 4 also demonstrated how Topeka’s population density compares with Lawrence and Manhattan indicating they have surpassed Topeka in density and compactness of the last 30 years.

Figure 3

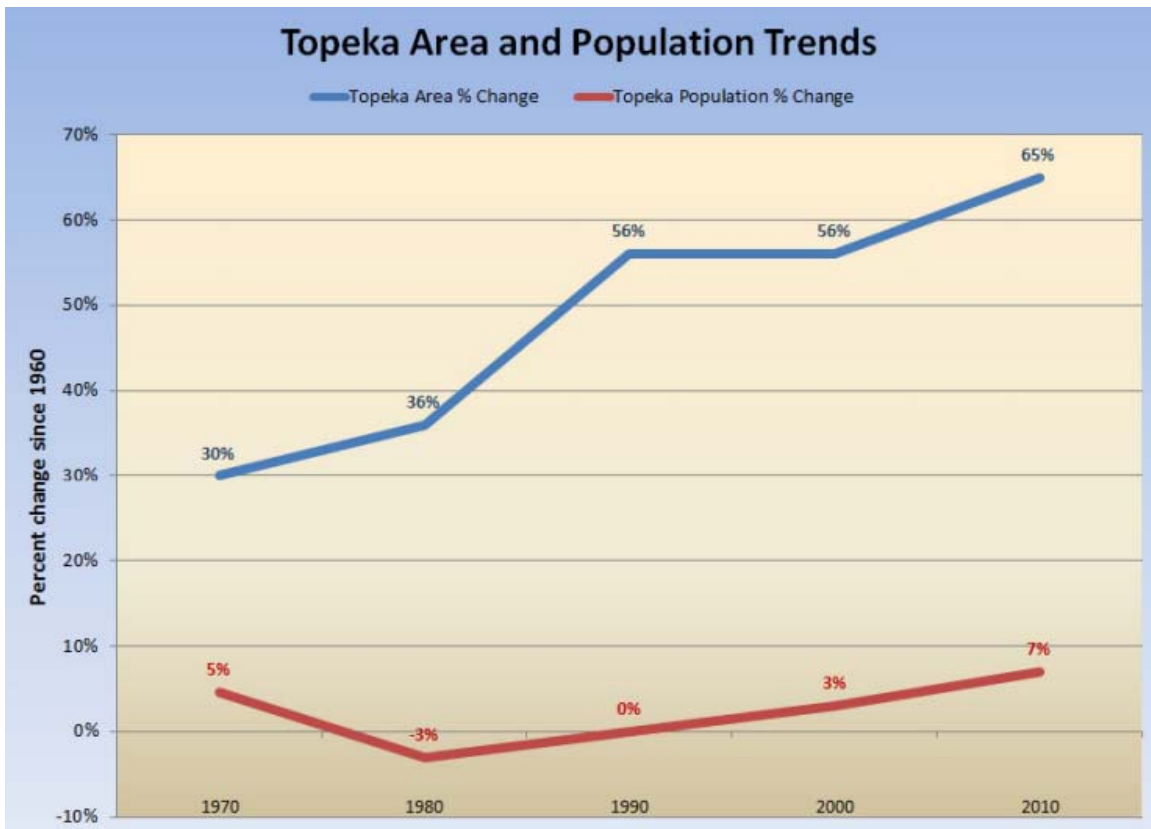
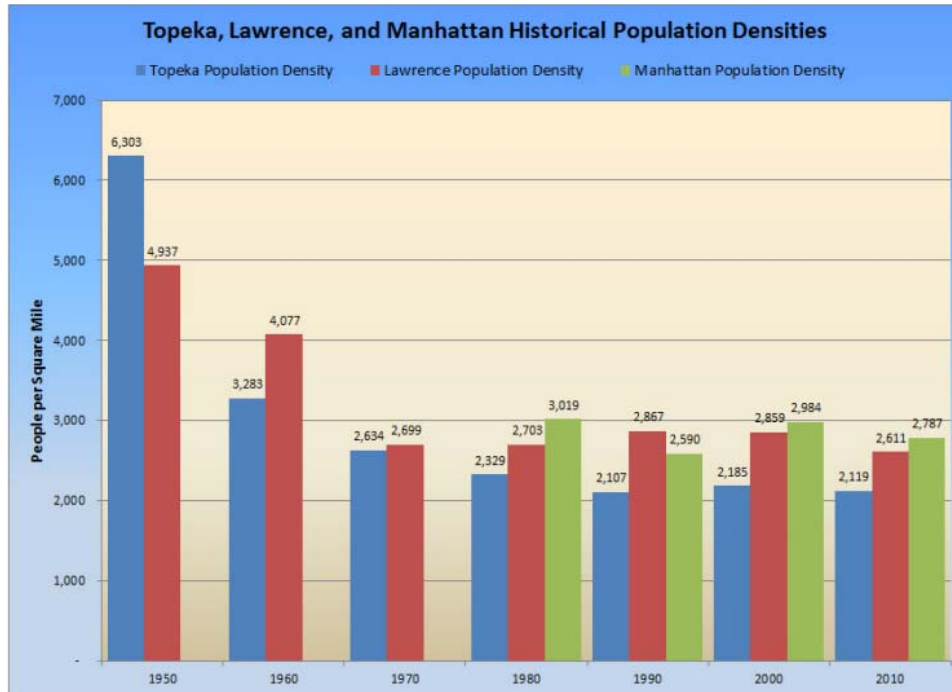


Figure 4



When development is compact and supports a higher population density, the cost of infrastructure and the benefit of services are both spread out over the higher population which can help keep a lid on taxes. Fire and police stations – which have coverage areas based on distance – can cover and protect more people without having to create new stations. And, more people are adjacent to or could benefit from new or improved infrastructure projects. With lower population densities, the benefits and impacts from these services or improvements are spread out and the impact is lost; net operating costs, however, remains the same and revenues are lower. There are fixed on-going operational costs that must be paid whether a fire station has 10 or 100 calls, or if a water line built for 100 people serves only 10. Taxpayers still have made the investment.

What does rural residential sprawl development look like around Topeka? Development surrounding Topeka has become low density residential which will never be able to be developed to an urban density. Parcels can be created that are exempt from City of Topeka platting approvals. These parcels just must have the minimum amount of street frontage and size (currently 200' and 3 acres). Some parcels created before the 1990s are even more awkward, creating lots that are long and narrow or “flag lots,” which have an extremely narrow space for a driveway then widen behind another parcel (See Figure 5).

Figure 5

## Quarter Section Development



These historic development patterns result in a land use pattern that is not easily annexed into the city to become more urbanized. The 3-acre parcels don't lend themselves to platting and subdividing to create city blocks and cannot be serviced efficiently with the current layout.

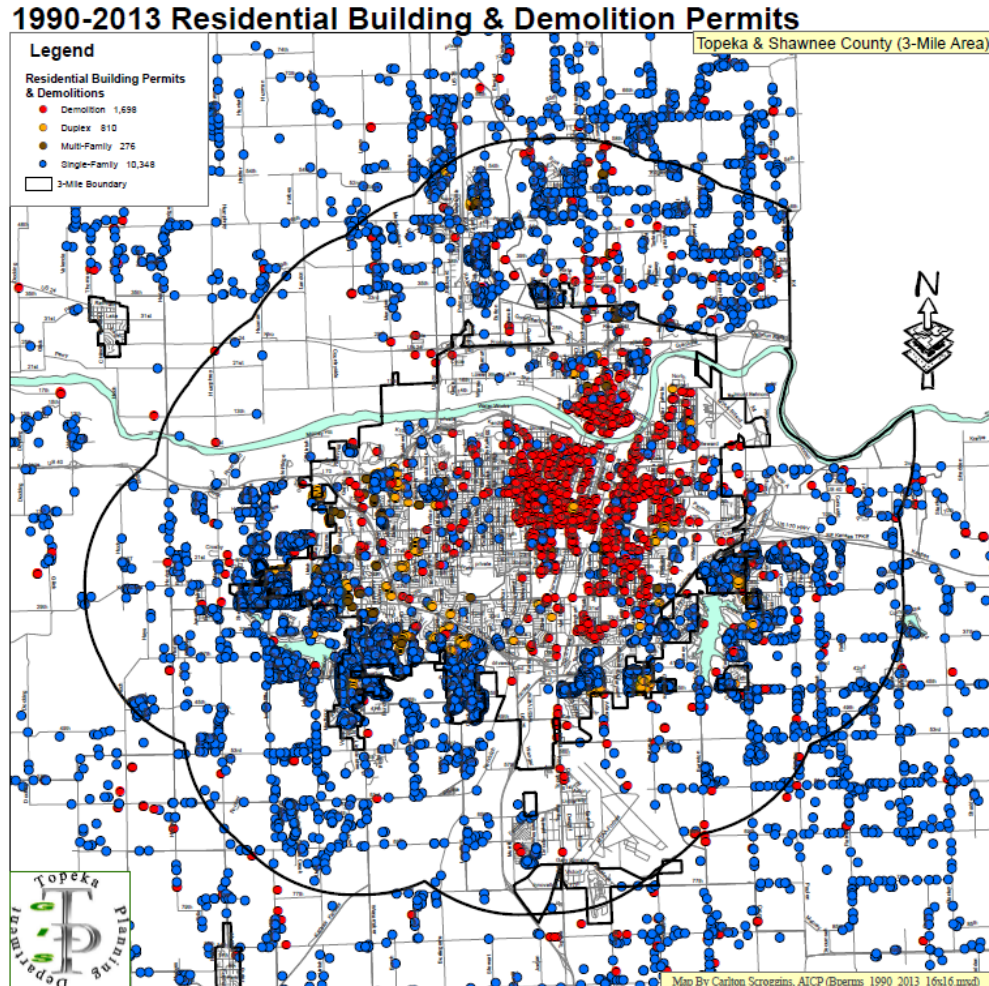
These issues combine to block potential growth areas for Topeka, effectively constraining where it can feasibly grow. Further, many of these areas are served with City of Topeka water and/or sewer infrastructure. A typical quarter section should be able to accommodate at least 120 dwelling units while example above has 20 dwelling units. The City doesn't get the most out of those investments due to the very low density of the population being served.

### d. Unbalanced Investment

A key point in the LUGMP 2025, and other Comprehensive Plans for that matter, was to limit the rural residential sprawl development pattern that has been occurring outside of Topeka. When comparing the residential building permits and demolition permits, it is evident that more and

more development was occurring on the fringe and outside of the city in a sprawling pattern rather than compact development (Figure 6).

Figure 6



When new growth is approved at annexed fringes of Topeka then new infrastructure is needed to support this developing area. There are also areas outside of the city limits that have city water or sewer service. Figure 7 below shows some of these areas in the 3-mile ETJ that are receiving infrastructure support (blue lines are city water lines and brown lines are city sewer lines outside of Topeka).

There is only so much money available to support urban infrastructure for the city. This urban infrastructure investment at the fringe of Topeka and outside of Topeka creates an unbalanced investment because less money is available to support the existing city infrastructure. It takes

higher taxes then to support the existing city infrastructure. Overall, there is a lower investment in the older areas where infrastructure improvements are needed.

Figure 8, the Neighborhood Health Map, reflects this trend by showing health of Topeka's neighborhoods. It mirrors Figures 6 and 7 by demonstrating the neighborhoods with the greatest need being in the center of the City where investment has lagged behind.

Figure 7  
Infrastructure Outside Topeka

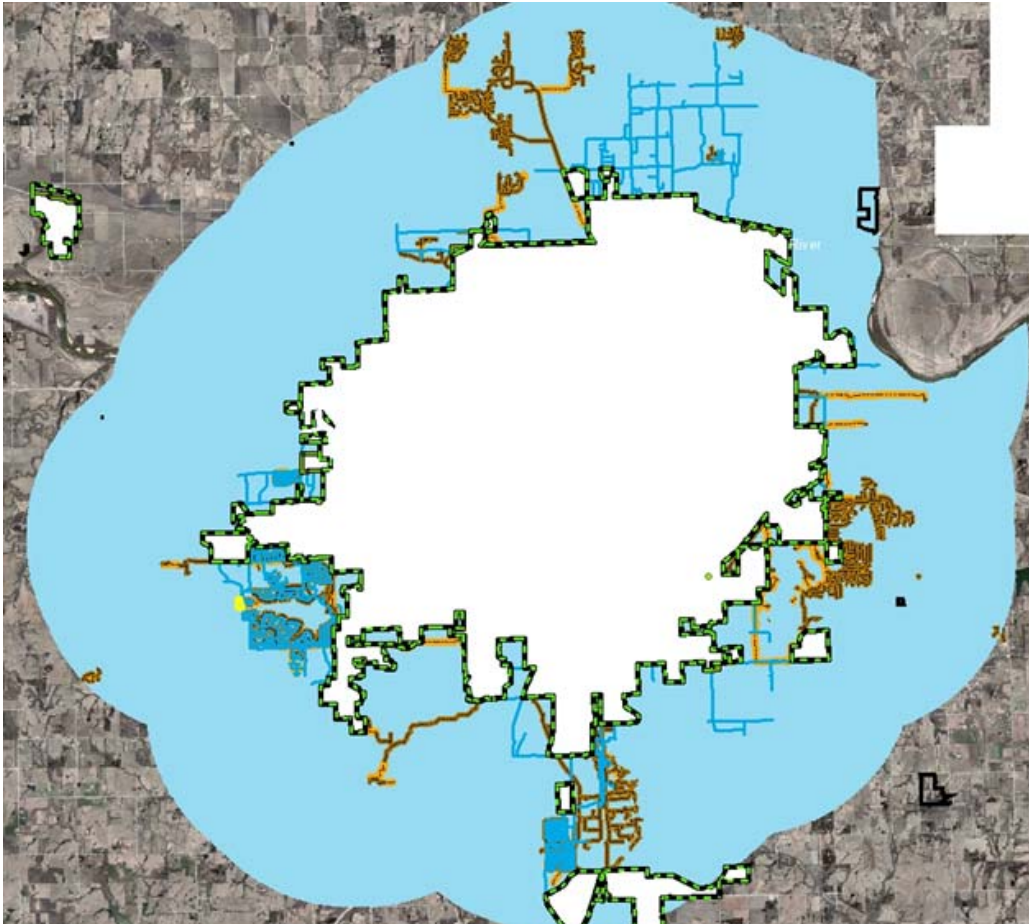
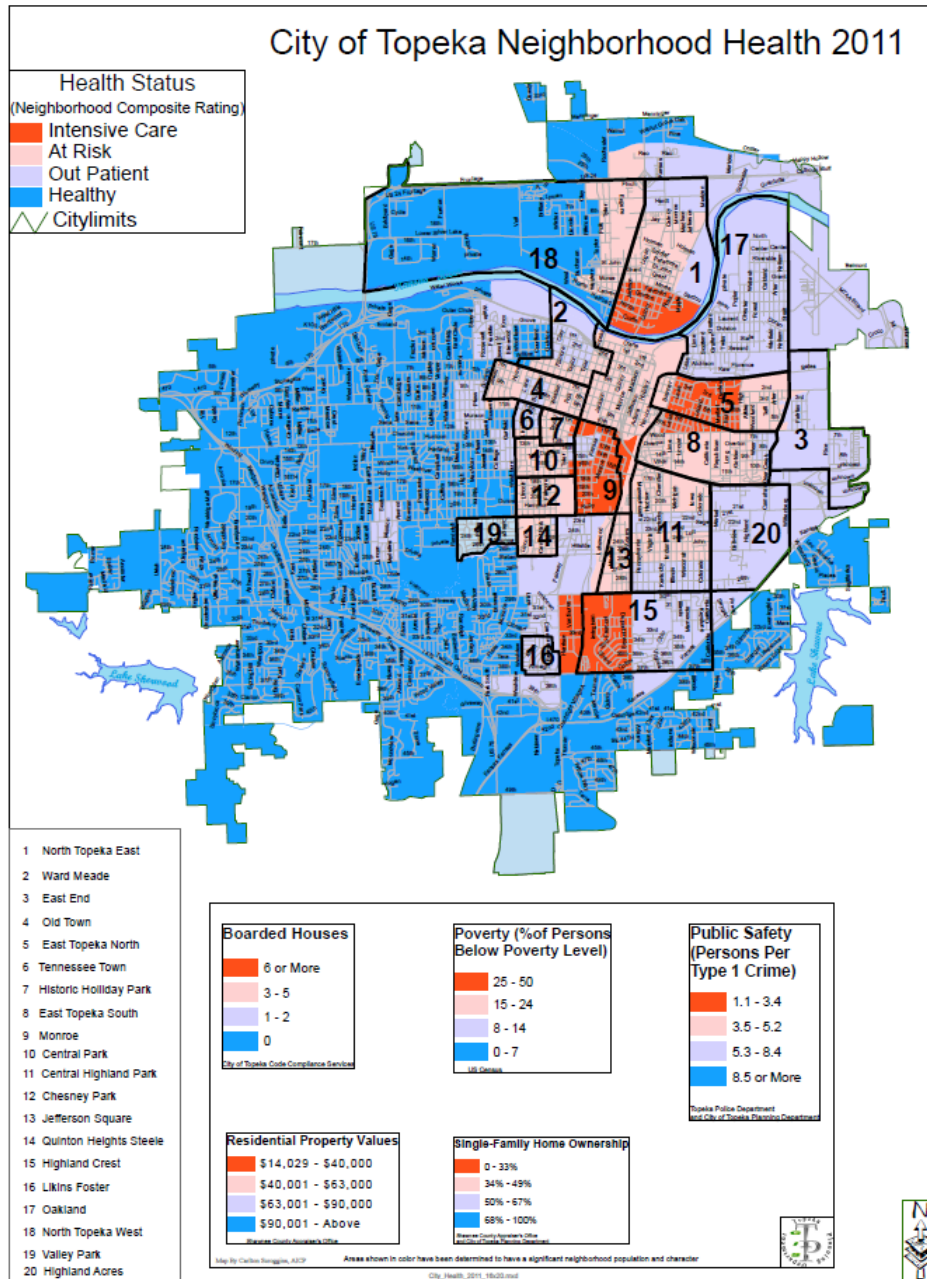


Figure 8



**e. Population Leakage**

Topeka’s share of the overall Shawnee County population peaked in 1960. Topeka’s share was at 84.5% in 1960 and has dropped ever since. In 2010 Topeka’s share had dropped to 71.6%.

Population leakage to Shawnee County has real consequences for the fiscal health of the city. A city or local economy grows when the 1<sup>st</sup>-In pays for their stuff. The 2<sup>nd</sup>-In pays for their stuff

and the 1<sup>st</sup>-In repair. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-In pays for their stuff and 2<sup>nd</sup>-In repair, etc. Through reciprocity, everybody pays for everybody's stuff (arterials, public safety, government, etc.). Cities do not start out poor. If reciprocity stops or outside (i.e. new) dollars stop flowing into the economy, the city or local economy stagnates. The loss of new dollars can lead to higher taxes for existing city residents as the city struggles to maintain service and aging infrastructure with the same population. Stagnate population also leads to fewer Federal/State transportation and housing funds to maintain roads and supply adequate affordable housing.

The population leakage trend is illustrated in Figure 9 below, showing how Topeka began losing a greater share of population to the unincorporated county in 1960. Figure 10 demonstrates a city/county population comparison between Topeka/Shawnee County and Lawrence/Douglas County. In short, Lawrence has gained population (8 out of 10 people) share relative to Douglas County, the opposite of what has been happening for Topeka (2 out of 10 people).

Figure 9

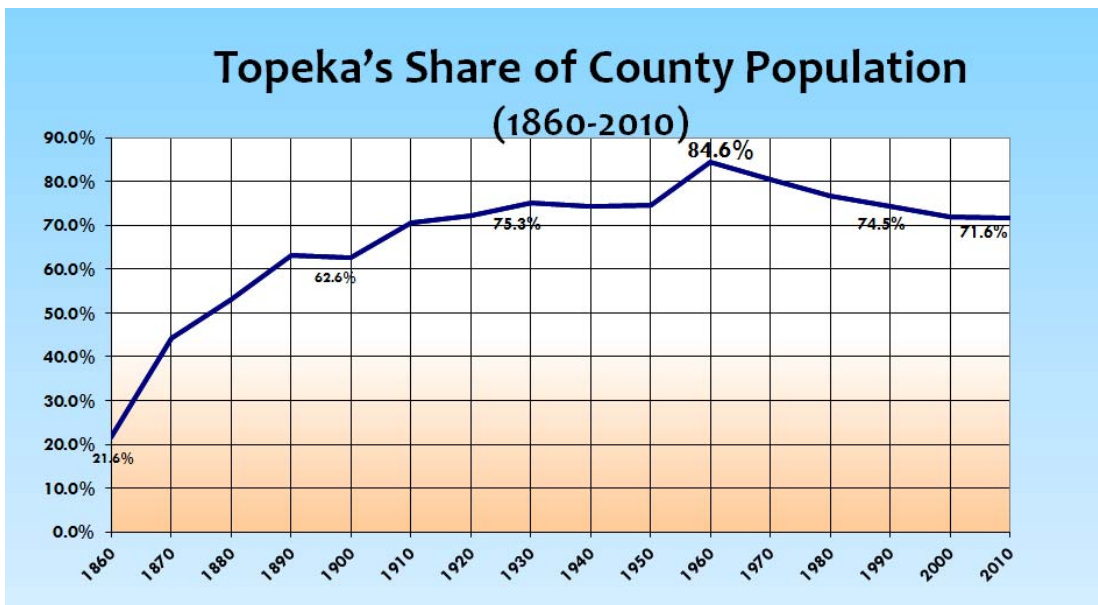
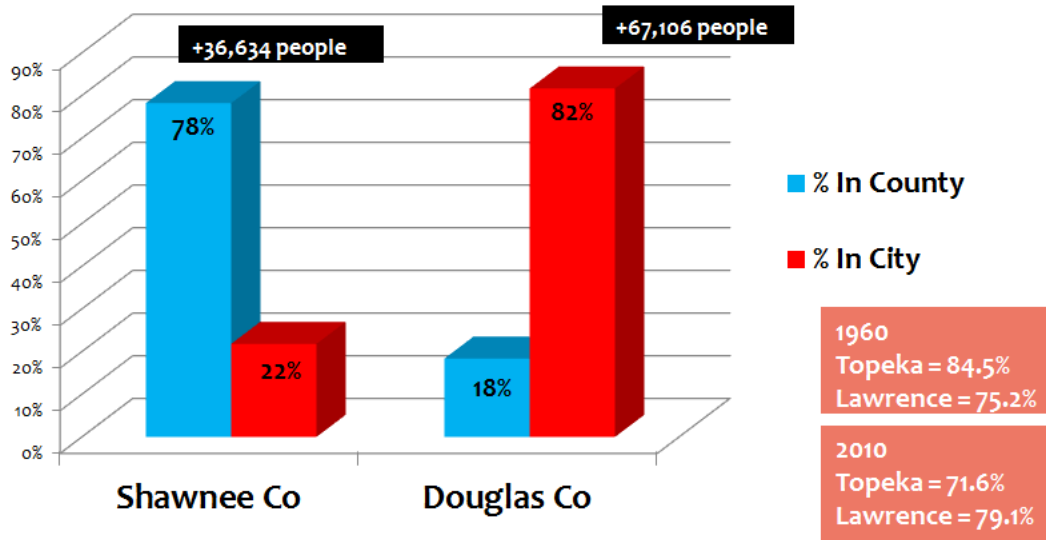


Figure 10

# 1960 – 2010 City/County Share of Population





**f. Profile Summary**

The City of Topeka Planning Department drafted a compilation and comparison of the last four decennial censuses after the release of the 2010 data. This report, “Census Profile 2010,” includes current and historical comparisons of population, households, housing, and poverty and income. Data for Lawrence, Kansas City (KS), Olathe, Overland Park, and Wichita were also included because they are the primary population centers in Kansas and are useful for comparison purposes to Topeka. The table below, Figure 11, shows how Topeka relates to the other cities in the region.

Figure 11

2010	Lawrence	Olathe	Topeka	KCK	Overland Park	Wichita	Kansas	United States
<b>Total Population</b>	87,643	125,872	127,473	145,786	173,372	382,368	2,853,118	308,745,538
<b>Annual Growth Rate (2000 – 10)</b>	0.9%	3.5%	0.4%	-0.1%	1.6%	1.1%	0.6%	1.0%
<b>Total Households</b>	34,970	44,507	53,943	53,925	71,443	151,818	1,112,096	116,716,292
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	37,502	46,851	59,582	61,969	76,280	167,310	1,233,215	131,704,730
<b>% Owner Occupied (of all occupied units)</b>	46.75%	72.68%	58.27%	59.46%	65.18%	61.35%	67.76%	65.10%
<b>% Vacant of Total Housing Units</b>	6.75%	5.00%	9.46%	12.98%	6.34%	9.26%	9.82%	11.38%
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$41,290	\$75,228	\$40,342	\$37,295	\$71,513	\$44,360	\$49,424	\$51,914
<b>Per Capita Income</b>	\$23,666	\$30,966	\$23,524	\$18,435	\$39,319	\$24,715	\$25,907	\$27,334

Looking at these comparisons, Topeka’s population reflects its position as a regional hub. However, it is not drawing the new residents like the Kansas City suburbs of Olathe and Overland Park. This low annual growth rate makes it harder for Topeka to compete with these other regional hubs for businesses and services. It is also behind the Kansas City suburbs in the overall wealth of its residents, both in terms of the median household income and the per capita income. Kansas City (KS) is the only population center with lower incomes than Topeka in this comparison.

The information regarding housing units shows potential for Topeka. While the vacancy rate is higher than the surrounding population centers, it is lower than both the state and national averages. Additionally, while the owner-occupancy rate is lower than many of the surrounding areas, it is not drastically different than historical trends.

# **Growth Management**

#### IV. Growth Management

Growth Management is an important tool for planning and promoting the timely and orderly growth of Topeka. The following policies do not seek to limit future growth. The Plan directs future development to growth areas and emphasizes that development occur where adequate urban infrastructure and services are in place or are planned to serve future urban uses, subject to policies of this Plan.

The Plan recommends policies, strategies, and actions to promote **compact growth** that is directly tied to the City's ability to adequately provide municipal services in the most cost-effective manner. In short, **urban development should follow urban infrastructure**. Decisions regarding land use should be considered after a determination has been made that urban infrastructure and services are in place or readily available to be extended at the developer's expense and the development aligns with the goals of this Plan.

The growth management goals and policies seek to assure the taxpayers of Topeka are not unreasonably burdened by the cost of new growth.

##### a. Overall Goals

- Establish an **Urban Growth Area (UGA)** – a true future city limit/influence boundary - where timing, density, and intensity of development correspond with the availability of urban infrastructure and services.
- Within Topeka UGA, establish service tiers based upon availability of adequate urban infrastructure and services, and to prioritize investment and development to those Tiers.
- Protect the Urban Growth Area from development that will hinder Topeka's ability to urbanize.
- Non-UGA Area and Utilities: Curb rural residential sprawl within the Non-UGA Area by strengthening Topeka's utility rules.
- To implement the goals of the LUGMP 2040, to provide for the orderly, compact, and sustainable development of the City, it will be necessary to annex additional land into the incorporated municipal boundaries of Topeka.
- Develop an **annexation program** to pro-actively annex contiguous and unilateral areas that are presently developed or recently sought approval to develop.
- Update the Annexation Exemption process for connection to City utility service within UGA and Non-UGA Area.

## **b. Urban Growth Area (UGA) Policies**

The overall priority is to direct future urban growth to existing areas within Topeka, either through infill development, redevelopment, or rehabilitation. Land within the Topeka UGA is encouraged, over the planning period, to be annexed into Topeka when ready for urban development.

Established by State law, Topeka has subdivision authority over the 3-Mile ETJ which includes the UGA. Topeka has extended water and sewer infrastructure beyond the city limits into the ETJ/UGA. As such, there are annexation rules regarding connecting to city water and sewer service. Within the UGA, annexation is required to connect to city water and sewer service. Outside the UGA, but within the ETJ, annexation is required for water service, and only consent to annexation is required for sewer service.

The existing zoning of the UGA/ETJ is RR-1 Residential Reserve District, the purpose/intent of which is stated in both Topeka and Shawnee County Zoning Codes as:

*“To provide for a transitional area between urbanized development with intensive activity areas, and the rural-agricultural areas; and which is expected to become urbanized in subsequent planning periods. The limitations of this district are intended to allow for the gradual development of urban uses and activities, therefore providing for the coexistence with agricultural farmland activities based upon the availability and extension of municipal facilities and services. Such urban development will be permitted at appropriate intensity-density levels to assure that public improvement expenditures are appropriately planned for in advance of the conversion to urban uses”.*

In addition, the existing LUGMP - 2025 policy promotes a 20-acre minimum lot size for rural development within the Topeka UGA.

There is a disconnect between the subdivision regulations, zoning regulations, and the Comprehensive Plan. The 20-acre minimum parcel size that is part of the existing LUGMP - 2025 wasn't fully implemented within Topeka's development regulations following its adoption. For instance, the subdivision regulations permit rural development on a 3-acre parcel with 200 feet of road frontage, without platting or City of Topeka approval. This equates to the City of Topeka having approval authority over only 8% of the remaining vacant land in the UGA.

This rural residential sprawl development pattern does not readily permit this area to be a transition between urbanized development and rural-agricultural areas, as called for in the Topeka Zoning Code, and doesn't readily permit the area to meet urban density requirements of the Plan in subsequent planning periods. The current 3-acre lot patterns will never become urban neighborhoods.

The pattern of rural development within the UGA has a direct impact on Topeka's ability to grow in a compact and fiscally responsible manner. Rural development standards must be tied to the

City of Topeka's platting and utility rules within the UGA to protect the area for future urbanization.

### **Policies**

1. Convert the existing Municipal Services Area (MSA) to an Urban Growth Area, a true future city limit/influence boundary. The existing MSA allows for a compact future growth area while recognizing the influence of the City of Topeka's utilities.
2. Establish policies and rules within the Urban Growth Area to guide future development of newly established lots. The minimum lot size for newly created lots shall comply with the City Zoning Code minimum lot sizes, unless specified below. These policies do not apply to existing lots created prior to the adoption of this Plan, unless specified below, and are applicable when no new public road is being created.
  - a. New development standards within the UGA (see examples in Figure 12) should be as follows:
    - o Platting Exemption (No Plat), if:
      - Existing lots at least 20 acres.
      - New lots at least 20 acres and,
        - 300' of contiguous road frontage, and;
        - Lot width/depth ratio no greater than 1/2.
    - o Minor Plat, if:
      - Single development lot on an existing lot less than 20 acres.
      - Proposing to create 2 lots or more, if one of the lots does not meet:
        - 20 acre minimum lot size, and or
        - 300' of contiguous road frontage, and/or;
        - Lot width/depth ratio no greater than 1/2.
        - If proposing more than 1 lot as a planned cluster development:
          - 20 acre minimum parent parcel,
          - 20% is permitted to be developed,
          - 80% is set aside for future urban development,
          - 300' of contiguous road frontage,
          - Separate driveways by at least 300',
          - Lot width/depth ratio no greater than 1/2, and:
          - Cluster lots in a way that preserves future urban development.
      - Proposing to split an existing lot to infill an area that is already part of a rural/urban residential development area, and there won't be an extension of utility infrastructure, then each lot should comply to the greatest extent with the above development standards as applicable and/or:
        - Be consistent with the average lot size of surrounding neighborhood.

Figure 12  
UGA Development Standards Example



3. Land within the Topeka UGA is encouraged, over the planning period, to be annexed into Topeka prior to urban densities of development, subject to the goals and policies of this Plan.
4. Ensure infrastructure extensions are to service multiple users. Discourage extensions (through waivers or other means) of city infrastructure for single users.
5. Except for the Employment Tier, do not extend city infrastructure outside or further outside of Topeka's corporate boundary (through waivers or other means) unless it meets the goals of the Plan.
6. Within the Employment Tier: Don't fund new infrastructure extensions if it undermines or negatively impacts existing infrastructure in the area. If the capacity of the existing infrastructure is inadequate, don't fund new infrastructure until the inadequate capacity issue is resolved or there is planned funding to fix that problem.

**i. Service Tiers**

**Map #1 – Topeka Urban Growth Area and Service Tiers**, identifies four service tiers of the overall UGA which have specific policies and recommendations for the timing of growth and development. The Plan suggests establishing development standards within these service tiers. The following considerations were used to determine the Service Tiers:

- The assumption is that orderly urban growth is most cost effective when compact and where the City has already made service and infrastructure investments.
  - There must be a **full suite of urban services** (Fire, Streets, Police, Sewer, and Water) available prior to the consideration for new urban development.
  - Those areas that are the most cost effective for the City's share of the cost of developing shall be the priority for future urban growth.
  - Tiers 1 – 3 are primarily residential neighborhood areas. The Tiers are rigid and should only be developed in a compact manner.
  - The Employment Tier is for employment related uses which are primarily industrial in nature. The Employment Tier is more elastic and doesn't necessarily need to be developed in a compact manner due to: higher return on investment, lower call volume for emergency services, and separation between industrial uses and neighborhoods.
1. Service Tier 1 – Tier 1 is existing vacant or redeveloped property within the City. Generally the full suite of urban services is available to the property. **These areas are the first priority for future growth/urban development** as no new or limited City investment in infrastructure or services is needed. If investment is necessary, it can more readily increase value in areas with existing population. At Risk and Intensive Care neighborhoods should receive highest priority.

### **Policies**

- Encourage infill and redevelopment within Topeka to take advantage of existing urban infrastructure and services and that promotes a range of uses that fit within the overall character of the area.
- Ensure urban infrastructure and services are in place, or readily available to extend at developer's expense, prior to considering land use decisions.
- Establish a concurrency policy to guide when urban infrastructure/services should be improved in advance of urban development. Consider who benefits from the improved infrastructure to help guide who should fund the improvements.
- Evaluate existing infrastructure and services to ensure there is sufficient capacity to serve proposed infill/redevelopment projects.
- Develop stormwater standards that recognize that urban sites have less space and are different than greenfield sites. Allow for creative "work around" solutions in developing/redeveloping urban sites through the update to City stormwater regulations.

- Develop performance standards to assist in evaluating and prioritizing infrastructure and service investments within Tier 1. At a minimum, consider the following:
  - Benefit “At Risk” or “Intensive Care” neighborhoods as identified on the City Neighborhood Health Map.
  - Promote infill/compact development, maximize other public investment, or direct new development to areas where existing infrastructure and services are already in place.
  - Increase transportation or housing choices.
  - Make the City a more desirable place to live, work and/or visit.
  - Have stakeholder or community involvement.
  - Advance or is consistent with any element of the Comprehensive Plan (e.g. neighborhood plan) or other adopted strategic plan (e.g. Sustainability).
  
- As of July, 2014 there were approximately 1,168 vacant platted single-family lots within Tier 1 (see Figure 13). Developing these lots would equate to upwards of approximately 2,700 new residents in those fringe areas where Topeka has made infrastructure and service investments. Receiving a return on those down payments by the City taxpayers should be the first priority. Target necessary infrastructure to help develop all recently platted single-family property that is within Tier 1.
  
- Throughout the 2000’s decade, Topeka added 10% of the decade’s population growth within Tier 1. Strive to add 25% of Topeka’s projected 25-year population growth within Tier 1 (see Figure 14).
  
- Infill/redevelopment should comply with adopted neighborhood plans.
  
- Continue to target incentives, funding, and planning assistance into “at risk” and “intensive care” neighborhoods, per the Neighborhood Health ratings.
  
- The greatest incentive the city has to promote development is where it chooses to spend infrastructure/arterial road investments. The City’s Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should target investments within Tier 1 to incentivize infill development, redevelopment projects, or simply make existing neighborhoods more livable.
  
- To help spur infill and redevelopment city-wide, consider crafting new incentives. Be creative, but ensure any financial incentives will return the City’s investment. Examples of fiscal incentives include:
  - a) Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Intensive Care/At Risk areas)
  - b) SORT
  - c) Historic Tax Credits
  - d) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Community Improvement Districts (CID)
  - e) Lower utility fees to connect to municipal infrastructure within Tier 1 priority areas



Figure 13

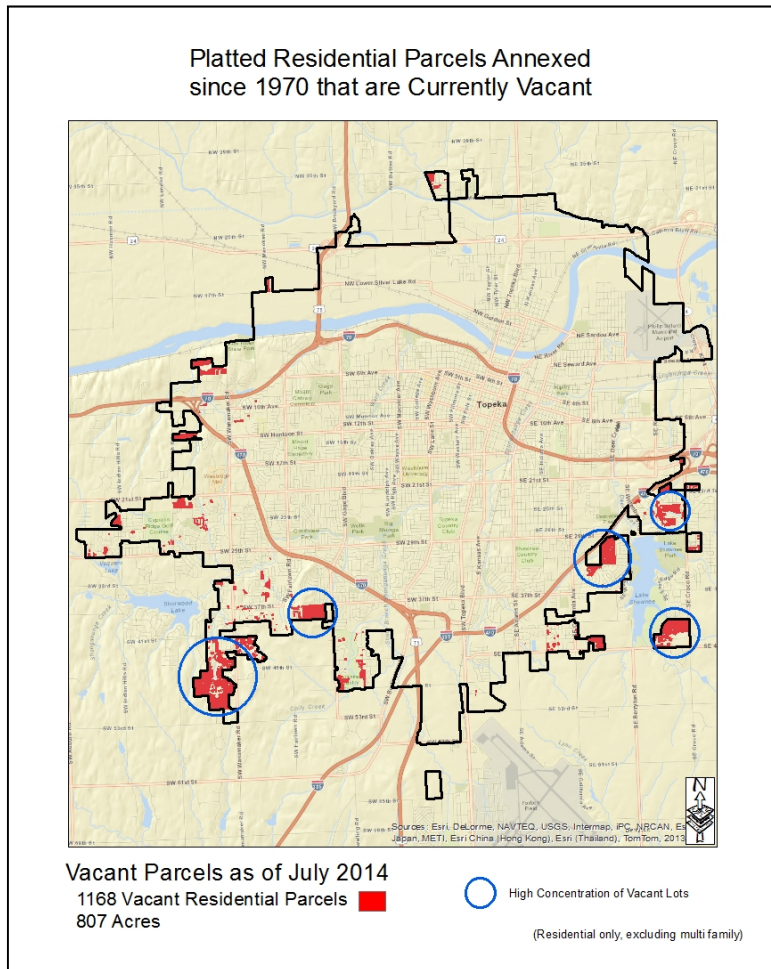
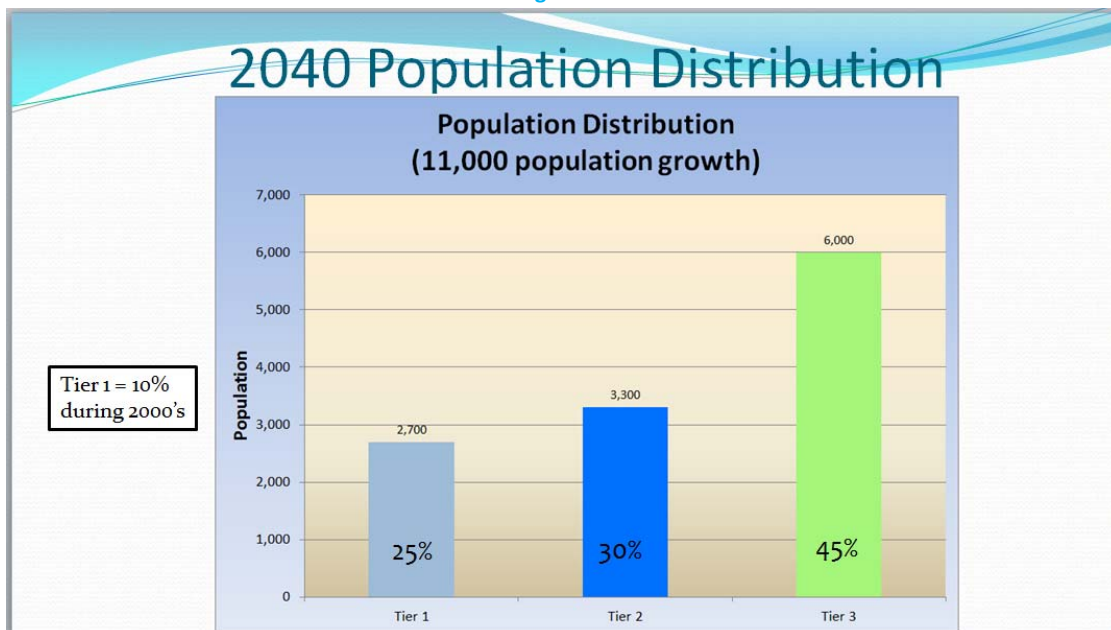


Figure 14



2. Service Tier 2 – Tier 2 is contiguous to the fringe of the City and is the next priority for Topeka’s future urban growth. There is a limited amount of land designated as Tier 2 due to the fact that all future urban development must be cost effective for the City and urban growth should only happen where Topeka has already made service and infrastructure investments. The key considerations used to categorize an area as Tier 2 are:

- Tier 2 is contiguous to the City.
- Developing Tier 2 makes the City more compact.
- There must be a full suite of urban services available in that area. Existing neighborhoods may continue to develop if one of the services is lacking (e.g. urban roads), provided all other services are adequate.
- If the area lacks the full suite of urban services, there are planned investments in one or more of the full suite of urban services, or the infrastructure or services will be extended at the developer’s expense.
- Tier 2 may also include areas that have been preliminarily or final platted for urban development but have yet to annex and develop.
- Tier 2 also includes areas with existing development that can be adequately served by City of Topeka services cost-effectively and make the City more compact. Annexing these properties also allows for orderly or squared City boundaries to provide clear jurisdictional responsibility for public safety services.

**Policies**

1. New development within Tier 2 should have access to the full suite of urban services or be considered premature.
  2. Annexation, platting and zoning to city zoning district should precede urban development in Tier 2.
  3. Mandatory platting for all development within Tier 2.
  4. No new rural development permitted within Tier 2.
3. Service Tier 3 – Tier 3 is the bulk of the UGA outside of Tier 1. Developing these areas for urban development is not cost effective because investments haven’t been made in all 5 of the urban services. The key considerations used to categorize an area as Tier 2 are:
- Tier 3 has limited or no existing urban services.
  - Urbanizing Tier 3 does not promote a more compact city at this time.
  - A major investment in one or more of the major urban services is necessary to support urbanization.
  - The area may lie within a rural water district and/or does not support City of Topeka fire suppression needs.

## **Policies**

1. No urban development or annexation within Tier 3 until the full suite of urban services is available.
4. Employment Tier – The key consideration for designating an area as Employment Tier are:
  - The Employment Tier contains areas that are zoned or planned for industrial type uses.
  - The return on investment from developing these areas with non-residential development is higher than developing residential areas.
  - Therefore, it may be prudent to consider extending urban infrastructure or services to serve a single or limited number of users.
  - When extending infrastructure consideration should be given to locating the infrastructure to serve the greatest extent possible. For instance, locating a new fire station so that it can serve an employment area and a new residential area will bring a higher return on the investment in the fire station and serve multiple objectives.

## **Policies**

1. Consideration may be given to non-contiguous development proposals provided the property can be served with acceptable levels of urban services until such time it is contiguous, and it does not impact capacity to provide service to future growth within the UGA Tiers 1/2 and the Employment Tier.
2. If an extension of water or sewer is necessary to serve an economic development /industrial project outside the UGA/Employment Tier without annexation, consideration should only be given under the following conditions:
  - A rail served site or a use that isn't compatible with the Employment Tier,
  - The City does not pay for the extension,
  - Life-cycle cost of maintaining and replacing infrastructure is positive to the City's utility fund,
  - It does not impact the City's capacity to provide service to future growth within the UGA Tiers 1/2 and the Employment Tier,
  - Significant system or facility expansions are not necessary solely as a result of this project,
  - Meeting minimum thresholds for water usage and jobs created.
3. Require platting for any sewer or water connection.

### **ii. Graduating Service Tier 3 to Service Tier 2**

Developing and annexing Tier 3 should not happen until it is cost effective for the City to make investments for all of the urban services in the area. An area may graduate from Tier 3 to Tier 2 when cost effective investments are made that will make all of the urban services

available to the area and if the area will make the City more compact. There are a few areas within Tier 3 that have most of the urban services available, but lack one or more of the services and may have other issues as well.

Those particular areas are identified on Map #1 with a star (and number) designation. The areas are described below with the numbered description corresponding with the number on the map. This generalized discussion should help prioritize which areas could receive strategic investment in order to spur new urban development for the City. While general issues are mentioned below, a more specific service analysis of each area should happen prior to any development proposal and potentially address in a more comprehensive area/sector plan. The type, intensity, and density of a particular development will impact service capabilities in different ways.

1. A significant sewer interceptor is needed in order to open this area for development. Further, Urish Road would need to be expanded to an urban road.
2. Area north of Huntoon Street lacks urban roads to accommodate urban development.
3. Area south of Huntoon Street lacks urban roads to accommodate urban development.
4. Municipal water service is challenging due to elevation issues.
5. Area lacks roads. Urban roads are needed to open this area for urban development.
6. Areas lack urban roads to handle increased urban development. There is also regulatory floodplain encompassing a portion of the areas.
7. SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street needs to be widened to an urban road to handle increased urban development directly north of SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street. Water capacity and pressure need a boost in this area from a new water tank that will also help Tier 1.
8. Area lacks an urban road to handle increased urban development. Water capacity and pressure need a boost in this area from a new water tank that will also help Tier 1.
9. Area lacks an urban road to handle increased urban development. Water capacity and pressure need a boost in this area from a new water tank that will also help Tier 1.
10. Area lacks urban roads to handle increased urban development.
11. Employment Tier area that could graduate to Tier 1 if City sewer was extended into the area.
12. Employment Tier area that could graduate to Tier 1 if a fire station was built in the area. Water capacity and pressure needs a boost in this area from a new water tank.

Urban Roads = an arterial road with 3-5 lanes that is a Complete Street.

### c. Non-UGA Area Policies

The Non-UGA Area includes everything else outside the UGA, but within the ETJ (See **Map #2 – Non-UGA Area**). Similar to the UGA discussion above, the rural residential sprawl development pattern pervades this area. Even though the area lies outside the UGA, steps should be taken to curb rural residential sprawl to permit the area to be a transition between urban and rural uses.

- This area is within the ETJ, but is not a UGA Tier.

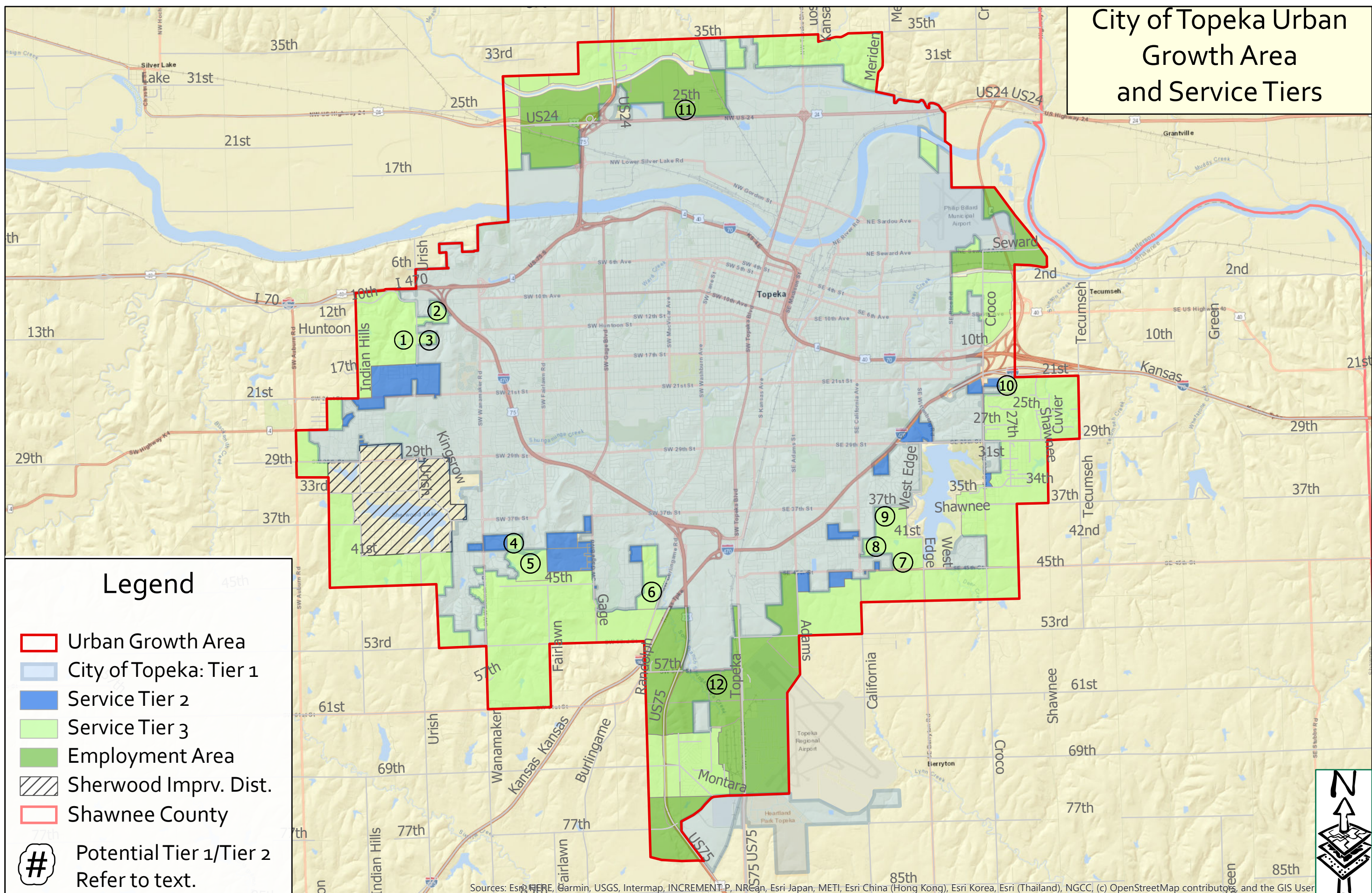
- City of Topeka utilities may be influencing the area through city infrastructure or through wholesale water contracts with rural water districts. Development supported directly or indirectly by City of Topeka utilities should follow UGA development standards with the possibility of a lot split instead of a minor plat for projects meeting the policies of this Plan.

### **Policies**

1. No urban development or annexation within the Non-UGA Area until the full suite of urban services is available, unless specified below.
2. Establish policies and rules within the Non-UGA Area to guide future development of newly established lots. These policies do not apply to existing lots, but rather new lot splits or subdivisions.
  - Change the Utility rule requiring Consent to Annexation for sewer service within the Non-UGA Area to a requirement to annex in order to receive that service.
  - Require platting for any new sewer or water connection.
  - When renewing wholesale water contracts with rural water districts, include provisions that rural water districts cannot serve customers until they have satisfied the requirements of this Plan.
  - New lots served by City of Topeka utilities, or new lots served by other utilities that are contractually supplied by City of Topeka utilities must comply with UGA development standards.
3. Existing Urbanized Areas with the Non-UGA Area policies (applies to Tier 3 as well).
  - The intent of this Plan is to apply the UGA and Non-UGA development standards is to new land divisions (unless noted otherwise). The development standards are not meant to apply to existing urbanized areas within the Non-UGA Area (and Tier 3), if:
    - The proposal is part of the originally approved plat,
    - The intensity of the original development will not be increased; and,
    - The project follows the policies of this Plan.



# City of Topeka Urban Growth Area and Service Tiers

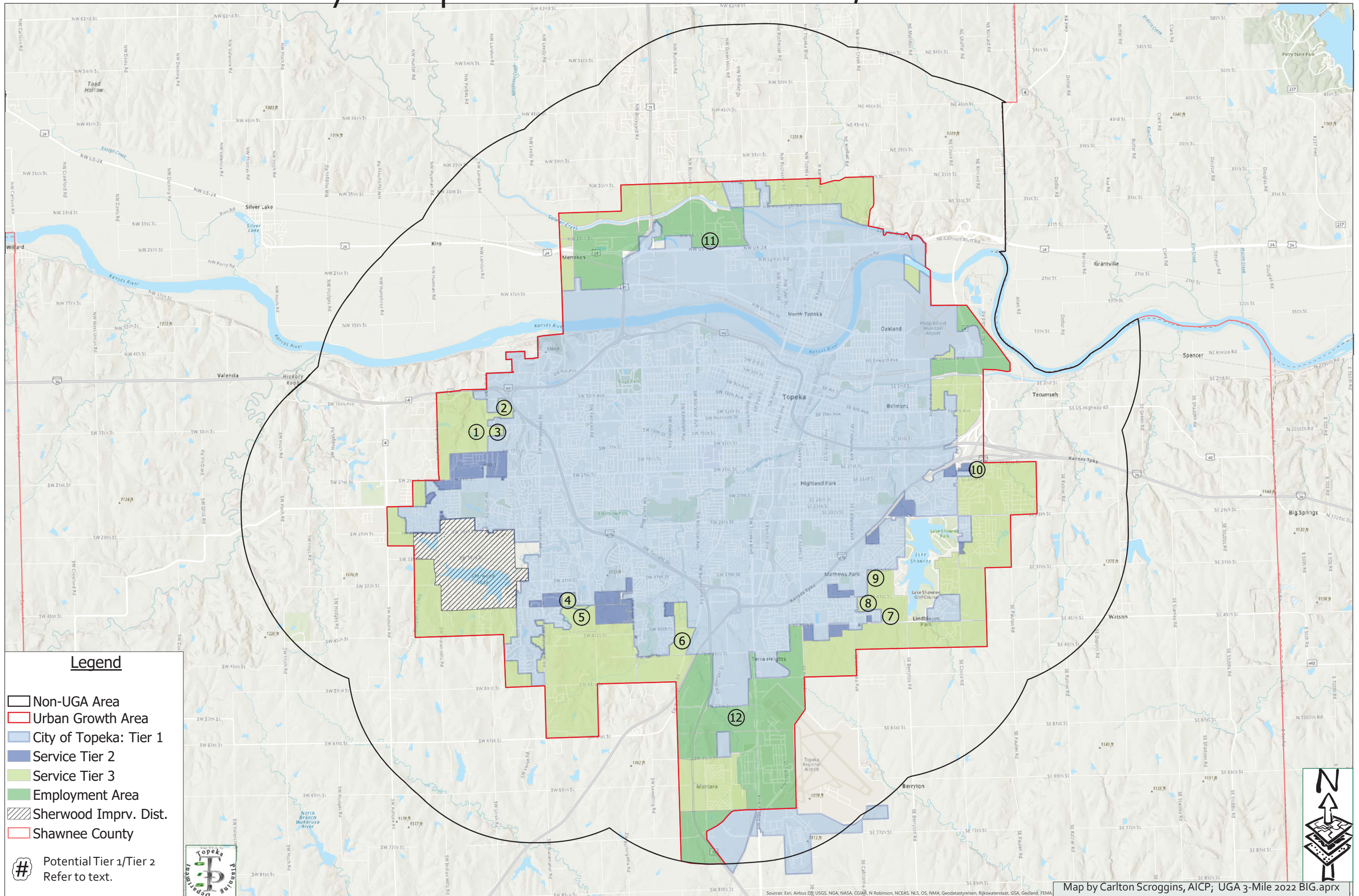


### Legend

- Urban Growth Area
- City of Topeka: Tier 1
- Service Tier 2
- Service Tier 3
- Employment Area
- Sherwood Imprv. Dist.
- Shawnee County
- # Potential Tier 1/Tier 2  
Refer to text.



# City of Topeka Urban Growth Area/Service Tiers



## Legend

- Non-UGA Area
- Urban Growth Area
- City of Topeka: Tier 1
- Service Tier 2
- Service Tier 3
- Employment Area
- Sherwood Imprv. Dist.
- Shawnee County
- # Potential Tier 1/Tier 2 Refer to text.



Source: Esri, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodatasystemen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA



#### **d. Annexation**

Cities grow through reciprocation. When a City begins, the 1<sup>st</sup> population pays for their infrastructure and services. When the 2<sup>nd</sup> population is added they pay for their infrastructure and services and also for the repair of the 1<sup>st</sup> group's. When the 3<sup>rd</sup> population is added they pay for their infrastructure and also for the repair of the 2<sup>nd</sup> group's, etc. If reciprocation stops or outside (i.e. new) dollars stop flowing into the economy, the city or local economy stagnates.

Even though the first priority area for new urban growth is Tier 1 (the existing City), there will be a need to eventually annex fringe areas to help keep the City's economy moving forward.

#### **Policies**

##### **1. General**

- a. Decisions regarding if a property can be served with the full suite of urban services should be made prior to annexing the property.
- b. Topeka should consider annexing contiguous properties to secure an orderly and logical service boundary.
- c. Develop specific annexation policies for particular areas as part of the Specific Plans planning process.
- d. Forward annexation requests greater than 10 acres to the Topeka Planning Commission for consideration and recommendation based on the land use and growth management principles of the Comprehensive Plan.

##### **2. Service Tiers**

- a. Development within Service Tier 2 shall be preceded by annexation.
- b. Bring forth the annexation of Unilateral Parcels within Service Tier 2 if those annexations are affordable and make the city more compact.
- c. Require consents to annexation for all development within Service Tier 3 and the Employment Tier.
- d. If a property within Service Tier 3 is contiguous, consideration should be given to annexing the property prior to development if all urban services are available and it is cost effective for the City.
- e. Contiguous new or existing development within the Employment Tier should annex before receiving any services from Topeka, provided the provision of full urban services is acceptable within that area.
- f. Consideration should be given to annexing non-contiguous properties requesting municipal services within the Employment Tier in conjunction with the goals and policies of the LUGMP 2040.

##### **3. Non-UGA Area**

- a. All development within the Non-UGA Area shall consent to future annexation if connecting to Topeka water or sewer service either directly or indirectly.

- b. The existing utility rule requiring consent to annexation for sewer service within the Non-UGA area should be changed to require annexation for sewer service.

#### **4. Annexation Exemption Update Policies**

- a. Adopt administrative standards for annexation exemptions:
  - Define hardship exemption criteria – grandfather pre-2007 recorded lots.
    - Extension of infrastructure to provide utility service should not be considered a hardship.
    - An infrastructure extension for a health hardship may be appropriate, if:
      - Properties between the hardship property and the original location of the infrastructure comply with the Comprehensive Plan or hardship exemption criteria.
      - Size of line does not exacerbate less than 20 acre lot growth.
  - Define economic development criteria – industrial uses within the Employment Tier.
  - The property must plat.
  - The proposal must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **e. Wastewater Management Policies**

Previous Wastewater Management Plans have established a primary service area for sanitary sewer service (see map in Appendix). New urban development would be required to connect to sanitary sewer service, however, policies of this Plan do not support urbanization except in Tier 1. Therefore, no urban development permitted within Tier 2, Tier 3 and the Non-UGA Area.

A property owner may seek a waiver from strict adherence to the requirement to connect to sanitary sewer service within the primary service area. There are existing urbanized areas that are currently receiving sewer service or have been approved for that service in the past. These policies are not meant to apply to these existing urban developments, unless noted below.

#### **Policies**

- a. New development should not be supported unless a site has been approved for similar development in the past and a benefit district is not feasible. Establish administrative standards for evaluating whether a wastewater waiver request would qualify under this policy, including the following:
  - The property was previously platted and/or is already developed.
  - A re-zoning would not intensify sewer usage. The amount of wastewater volume generated by the proposed development would not exceed what would have or has been created under the zoning/development for the platted lot(s).
  - The cost to extend sanitary sewer to the property exceeds a reasonable amount.
  - The cost to the property owner under a benefit district exceeds a reasonable per lot district cost or is not feasible because of a lack of participation.
  - The owner agrees to connect to sanitary sewer when made available.
  - Property owner(s) agrees to participate in a future benefit district for the extension of sanitary sewer to the property and share their pro-rata costs.
  - Approval of a waiver will not worsen any known environmental impacts.
  - Design of on-site sewage disposal system is approved by the Shawnee County Health Agency and City of Topeka Water Pollution Control Division. Approval may include conditions to mitigate environmental impacts.
  - If outside city limits, property owner(s) consents to annexation.
  - Meets the plat requirements.
  - Meets the policies of this Plan.

# Land Use

## V. Land Use

One of the overarching pillars for the Land Use and Growth Management Plan – 2040 is **Compact Growth**. Compact growth is:

- Growth where the city has already made infrastructure and service investments.
- Compact growth uses less land, requires less costly infrastructure investment, and returns more value per acre.
- Compact growth includes a range of housing choices, higher residential densities, a sufficient amount of nonresidential (retail and employment-related uses), and open space. Developing at higher residential densities and mixing uses, rather than only developing single-family neighborhoods apart from nonresidential uses, will promote compact growth by using infrastructure and services more efficiently.
- Serving higher density residential and mixed use neighborhoods is more fiscally efficient than serving only low density neighborhoods. Higher densities and mixed uses allow more people to use infrastructure, which is fiscally responsible and provides a great return on investment in the infrastructure. Transportation choices are also important for future compact growth. Those choices include designing roads and facilities that handle multiple users, such as autos, public transportation, pedestrians, bicycles, etc.
- New neighborhoods should have a high level of connectivity throughout. Complete streets should connect within neighborhoods and should also connect to adjoining neighborhoods. Street should also be structured in short blocks help promote walkability. Walkable neighborhoods are an important element of the livability of our community and will help attract “Millennials” and younger age cohorts vital to a growing community.

The more dense and mixed use character promoted by this Plan will need greater attention to design details. The Topeka Zoning Code should be updated to include reasonable building and site design standards for new and redeveloped areas which improve:

- Integration with surrounding neighborhoods;
- Pedestrian movement to and within the development;
- The aesthetics of the development from the surrounding street system; and
- The design to create attractive focal points for the surrounding populations.

### a. Model Neighborhood

Neighborhoods are the primary building blocks of our community. Good neighborhood design is important to quality of life, maintaining property values, and establishing a sense of place. Individual development proposals, such as new subdivisions, commercial developments, and zone change proposals are like pieces of a puzzle that must be coordinated with each other and the street system so that our neighborhoods function efficiently and effectively. This section of the Plan could be considered as instructions to that puzzle. It illustrates and outlines design principles for two types of neighborhoods: Traditional Neighborhood Design and the Hierarchal.

Traditional Neighborhood Design is named because it is based on older, more traditional, design principles, such as the grid street system, smaller lots and a less strict separation of different types of land uses. The Hierarchal neighborhood is based on a system of streets that perform varying functions and a careful separation of the different land uses from each other. Both

designs are appropriate. The key planning issue is that neighborhood design should be based on guiding principles that coordinate the many systems constituting our city, especially the land use and transportation systems.

The following neighborhood principles will not apply all of the time. Most of our neighborhoods were built over time by different developers, often with little planning or coordination. Each development proposal or request for a change in zoning classification should be considered in light of these principles, but also must be viewed in context of surrounding development patterns and land uses. The job of the professional planning staff, Planning Commission, and other decision makers is to determine when the model concepts 'fit' the specific proposal being considered and when a modification of the principles is in order.

**i. Design Standards**

This neighborhood design concept is based on a relatively strict hierarchy of the two primary systems constituting the neighborhood – land uses and streets. This concept is illustrated in Figure 10. The first graphic illustrates a neighborhood developed according to the planning principles outlined in this section of the Plan. The second shows four adjacent neighborhoods.

**Streets:** The three main street classifications are: arterial, collector, and local. Each of these has important guidelines governing their location and design. An important function of the planning staff and planning commission is to coordinate the development of the street system among the various property developers so that proper traffic circulation is maintained, not only within a particular neighborhood, but also among the various adjacent neighborhoods. Sidewalks (5') should be provided along all streets.

**Arterials Streets:** The primary function of these streets is to move traffic from one neighborhood to another or from one area of town to another. Collector and local streets are normally built by the developer to support new residential and commercial land uses. However, construction of arterial streets requires significant public investment. These are the "community's" roads – they were paid for by all taxpayers. It is imperative that their primary function moves traffic, and does not serve solely as access to adjacent properties. As more driveways intersect with arterial streets, the less they are able to perform their primary function of moving traffic and cause greater safety conflicts. One of the competitive advantages of a city the size of Topeka is a relative lack of traffic congestion, compared to many larger cities. To maintain this advantage, it is vitally important that our major streets be able to move traffic efficiently.

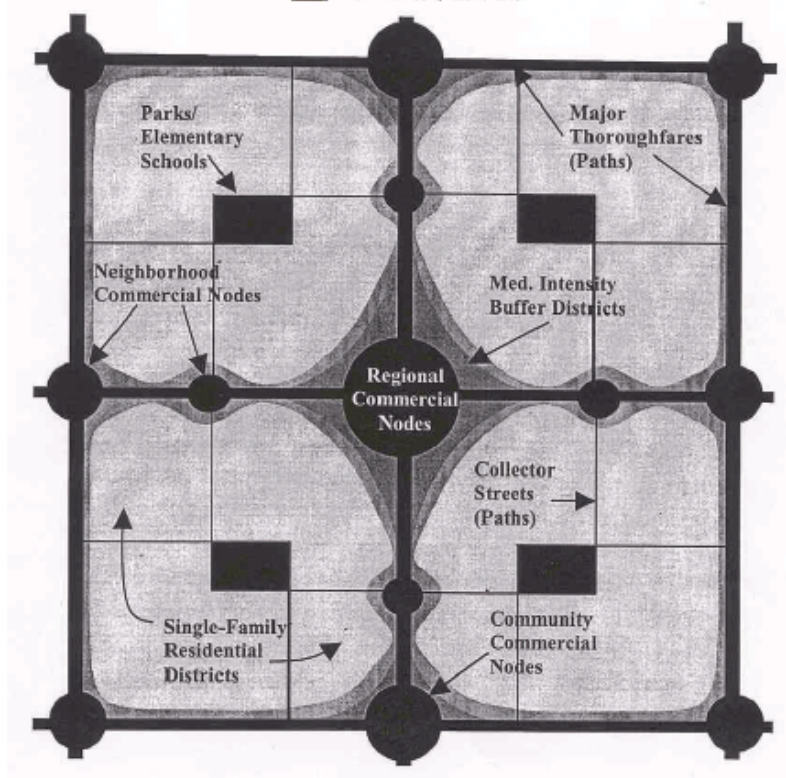
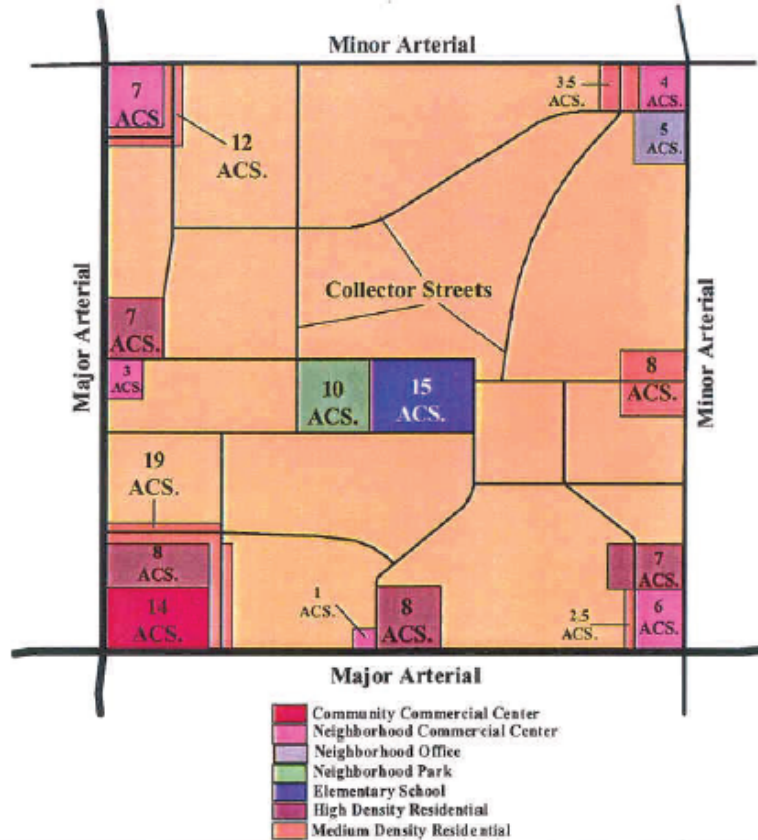
**Principles:**

1. Spaced approximately one mile apart, forming the boundaries of the neighborhood.
2. Primary function is moving traffic.
3. Access should be at intersections with other arterial streets, and sometimes with collector streets.
4. Should have at least two or four traffic lanes, plus a center turn lane, when traffic engineering principles dictate. It has been shown in national research that road "diets"

of the 3-lane variety are safer in metro areas than 4-lane arterials while still accommodating traffic volumes.

5. The Average Daily Trip (ADT) level for a 2-lane arterial is 8,000 – 11,000 a day. Generally, when volumes are projected to exceed 12,000 – 13,000 trips, it may warrant increasing through lane capacity from 2 lanes to 4 lanes to maintain an acceptable level of service.

Figure 15  
Model Neighborhood





**Collector Streets:** The primary function is to move (collect) traffic from local streets and funnel it out to arterial streets. A secondary function is to provide access to adjoining properties; however, this should be minimized as much as possible.

**Principles –**

1. Between two to four collector streets should intersect each linear mile of arterial street. Too few connections results in traffic congestion and too many result in undesirable traffic patterns through the neighborhood.
2. A collector street should not extend all the way through a neighborhood, providing a direct connection between two arterial streets. This would encourage traffic through the neighborhood, rather than directing it to the arterial streets. Street design should discourage traffic through the neighborhood, which has neither its origin nor destination in that neighborhood.
3. Pavement widths should be wider than local streets to encourage traffic to use the collector streets.
4. Collector streets should be adjacent to the neighborhood park or school located in the center of the neighborhood.
5. The number of lots fronting on the collector street should be minimized so that traffic movement is maximized.
6. In most instances, the street should be extended to the edge of the subdivision to allow extension into adjoining properties.

**Local Streets:** The primary purpose of local streets is to provide direct access to adjacent lots.

**Principles –**

1. Curvilinear streets add interest and variety to a neighborhood.
2. Cul-de-sacs should not exceed approximately 500 feet in length or a standard block length plus 200 vehicle trips per day.
3. Local streets should not intersect with an arterial street unless unique or difficult design issues exist.
4. Cul-de-sacs should be designed to terminate close to the arterial street to avoid lots backing towards the arterial; a siding orientation is preferred.
5. Review each development to determine the need to allow for extension of local streets into adjoining properties to provide for adequate circulation between adjacent neighborhoods and subdivisions.

In order to further advance compact and connected patterns of development central to the fiscal health goals of the City, TND principles should be integrated into a hybrid neighborhood model and implemented through engineering/subdivision rules.

Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) is a pattern of development that promotes connected, mixed use, and walkable neighborhoods. TND neighborhoods are more compact communities designed to encourage bicycling and walking for short trips by providing destinations close to home and work, and by providing an environment oriented towards people first and the automobile second. The design principles stress that projects should

have a variety of housing types, public spaces in a central location, and be pedestrian oriented. The TND principles also promote fiscal benefits by emphasizing compactness, mixed uses, and higher densities.

The TND pattern of development isn't a new idea. Many of Topeka's early neighborhoods were designed in a manner from which TND borrows its key elements. As such, the TND principles outlined below can not only be applied to new neighborhoods, but also can be used to weave an infill or redevelopment project into an existing neighborhood.

### **Street Design Principles –**

1. Design elements should create active streetscapes that tend to slow down traffic, such as narrow street widths, smaller signs, parked cars, and other traffic 'calming' techniques, such as center isles, that help to establish eye contact among pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.
2. Street design should allow travel from one destination to another without using the formal hierarchy of collector and arterial streets.
3. A grid, or other street system should be designed to provide interconnectivity to the various activity centers, such as the park and school. This design disperses the traffic, rather than concentrating it in a few 'higher level' streets by providing multiple route choices.
4. Numerous cul-de-sacs, and street designs that do not provide interconnectivity are discouraged.
5. Smaller curb radii should be used to encourage slower traffic.
6. Use of alleys is encouraged:
  - a. Allows narrower lots with fewer driveways on local streets;
  - b. Fewer driveways mean more space for on-street parking;
  - c. Provides space for underground or unattractive overhead utilities, and trash pickup and storage, while freeing streets for trees and other plantings;
  - d. Alleys, providing access to the garage, eliminates the need to back onto the local street, which is inherently unsafe.
8. Street trees should be placed close to the street to provide shading and cooling of the sidewalk.

### **Land Use Design Principles -**

1. Includes a variety of housing types and styles, including detached single-family, townhouses, twin homes and zero-lot-line homes.
2. Homes on smaller lots located closer to the street, (often as close as 5 feet to the sidewalk) saving space, creating a more intimate feel to the neighborhood and promoting affordability, and social interaction.
3. Parking in the rear, accessed by alleys.
4. The use of front porches is encouraged.
5. The neighborhood should have a discernable center. This is often a square or common green space, and is sometimes near a busy or memorable street intersection.
6. Buildings at the neighborhood center should be located close to the street to create a strong sense of place.

7. Most dwellings should be within a five-minute walk of the center – about one-quarter mile.
8. Shops and offices can be located in a central location to the neighborhood or located at the edge of the neighborhood.
9. It is often appropriate to mix land uses, such as allowing shops or small businesses on the ground floor with second story dwelling units. Dwelling units above garages and small accessory apartments allow teenagers and elderly family members to maintain a separate dwelling but live close to relatives.

## **b. Future Land Use**

The main land use types that make up neighborhoods are: residential, commercial and open space/parks. The various land use types and street system must be planned in conjunction with each other to ensure a well-designed and functioning neighborhood. Alleys or rear lot lines usually provide a better transition between different land use types because it results in a 'back to back' relationship that is preferable to 'face to face' relationships. Normally, each side of a street should receive similar land use treatment. An exception is an arterial street, which can be wide enough to act as a transition between differing land use types. Common areas, such as open space, should be approved only with an associated homeowner association to ensure long-term maintenance.

The major themes of the future land use plan are Mixed Use and Nodal Development Areas. The following is a brief discussion of those themes.

### **i. Mixed Use**

Mixed use is emphasized and promoted throughout the future land use plan. The basic concept is to mix together housing, commercial, and jobs, along with open space and other amenities to provide a balanced mix of land uses in an efficient and compact pattern. It is important to also provide enough of these activities to serve the daily needs of residents and workers. This efficient land use pattern will allow people to live near where they work, shorten driving distances and reduce car trips.

Mixing uses and developing in a compact manner also results in lower infrastructure costs because the development uses land more efficiently and requires less land. Compact development often leads to lower costs for public infrastructure because sewer lines are shorter, the roads are more efficient, and the infrastructure can be shared by multiple land uses. Compact development can also lead to lower ongoing municipal service costs because, for instance, the same fire station can access each emergency in a shorter time, and the public works department needs less crew members to service denser neighborhoods.

### **ii. Nodal Development Areas**

The "Nodal" commercial/mixed use development pattern is the preferred development pattern for this future land use plan. In contrast to "Strip Commercial Areas" which is characterized by high-intensity, shallow depth commercial uses (each with its own driveway) extending linearly along a street corridor, nodal development requires the termination of commercial uses within near proximity to its intersection. Within the nodal development area, cross access between properties is employed to limit driveways on the main road. Nodal areas exhibit an ideal pattern of land use because the higher intensity uses are concentrated at major road intersections that are designed under street design criteria to handle the increased traffic.

### iii. Future Land Use Categories

*\*Topeka Future Land Use Map (Map #3) only provides broad brush guidelines for actual development patterns and is not intended to be a site specific guide for each individual lot or parcel nor is it a zoning map. There may be smaller parcels suitable for uses other than what is designated on the map. Site specific development proposals and rezoning requests should also follow more specific area, corridor, and neighborhood plans, as well as, the Golden criteria.*

**Parks/Open Space/Recreation** – These areas are characterized by both public and private parks, trails, and open spaces; including golf courses, cemeteries, and recreational fields. The areas may also contain conserved lands not suitable for development, such as, steep slopes, flood ways and wetlands.

**Rural Residential/Agriculture**–The category is intended to recognize areas within the City’s three-mile extraterritorial jurisdiction and outside the City’s Urban Growth Area (UGA) that should remain reserved for rural residential single-family uses, agriculture, or open space with a minimum lot size of 20 acres because of the lack of urban services and infrastructure or the ability to extend these services. Development and urban services are not planned in these areas within this planning horizon.

**Urban Growth Area/Residential** – This area is meant for future primarily urban residential neighborhoods and is expected to systematically urbanize in a compact manner as the City of Topeka expands services and infrastructure in the future. No urban development is permitted until after Topeka is ready to annex the proposed development area. See **Map #1 Topeka Urban Growth Area and Service Tiers** and Growth Management Section for additional important details regarding the timing of compact urban development and appropriate rural development.

**Urban Growth Area/Employment** – This represents the Employment Tier within the UGA that is meant for employment-related uses. The areas are either zoned for industrial uses or are planned future employment areas. See **Map #1 Topeka Urban Growth Area and Service Tiers** and Growth Management Section for additional important details regarding the development of the Employment Tier.

**Urban/Suburban Low Density Residential** – These areas are predominately characterized by a cohesive display of single-family or two-family residential development, up to a maximum of 6 dwelling units per acre, primarily in the form of subdivisions, that are within the current city limits where the full range of urban services (sewer, water, police, fire, and urban roads) are either provided or expected to be extended within this planning horizon.

Typical residential densities are in the range of 3-4 dwelling units per acre on generally ¼-acre platted lots for the post-1950 subdivisions. Single-family development at higher densities (25’

wide lots) exists in the pre-1950 neighborhoods of the city. Religious assembly uses are also included within this category.

New single- and two family development proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the character of the existing residential development in regards to building designs, lot layouts, streets, and setbacks. Infill development is encouraged in these areas where there is already existing infrastructure. Complete streets and pedestrian connectivity between and within subdivisions is encouraged and should be provided.

**Medium/High Density Residential** – This category is characterized primarily by triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses, and apartments in the realm of 7 to 15 dwelling units per acre for medium density developments and exceeding 15 dwelling units per acre for high density developments.

High density residential development is appropriate towards the periphery of neighborhoods, adjacent with arterials, and having access through a collector street. Medium and high density residential is also appropriate on the edges of the primary commercial corridors and adjacent to commercial centers at arterial intersections. High density development should not be concentrated in a particular neighborhood, but spaced throughout the City. Medium density residential may be used carefully as infill development in areas where it is compatible and where there is already adequate infrastructure. Medium and high density residential uses are also appropriate as part of Mixed Use Areas or Mixed Use Nodes. In addition, Medium and High Density areas could include a mix of uses on a smaller scale.

Medium and high density residential is compatible within areas adjacent to Regional Commercial Centers (e.g. Wanamaker Corridor and Downtown). Residential densities should transition from higher (apartment complexes and offices) to lower (quadplexes and triplexes) as the development progresses farther from the commercial corridor and into lower density single-family neighborhoods. Medium density residential uses are often considered suitable transitions between single-family residential uses and more intensive commercial uses.

New medium and high density developments should reinforce and be compatible with the character of the existing residential development in regards to building designs, lot layouts, architectural form, connectivity, and setbacks. Street level activity may be encouraged for the highest density multiple-family residential developments; particularly those within mixed use areas and Downtown. New medium and high density residential development proposals shall demonstrate they will not impact the existing development pattern in the neighborhood and maintain the quality of the neighborhood by incorporating compatible design characteristics.

**Office** – This category is characterized by business, medical, health, and professional office centers where there is not a significant display of retail and commercial uses. The size and scale of the office development should fit the character of the surrounding area. Research, science, and technology parks; college campuses and educational institutions; and medical clinics and hospitals are also appropriate in office districts.

Offices usually make suitable transitional uses between commercial centers and residential neighborhoods, but are also generally appropriate for Commercial areas. Office districts may be adjacent with neighborhoods where expansions of further commercial uses are not encouraged. Office uses are also appropriate as part of Mixed Use Areas or Mixed Use Nodes. Medium density residential developments that demonstrate compatibility with surrounding land uses may also be appropriate transitional land uses in areas designated Office.

**Mixed Use** - This category comprises areas which exhibit potential for new development or redevelopment of mixed use commercial, residential, and/or office that may be located within the same buildings or within the same area. These areas are characterized where there is a significant display of undeveloped land or vacant buildings that exhibit potential for mixing uses.

Medium and High Density Residential uses are appropriate within the mixed use area. While not considered a primary use within the mixed use area, Urban/Suburban Low Density Residential uses could also be appropriate provided they are correctly integrated with the other uses. The appropriate intensity level of commercial uses within mixed use area is Neighborhood Commercial, which should be developed in a nodal pattern at intersections rather than in a strip pattern along the street.

There are certain Mixed Use areas where building design and site layout considerations will be part of the review for new development. Items such as architectural form, building setbacks, street-level activity, connectivity, etc. will be taken into account. For instance, the Mixed Use area along Kansas Avenue south of Downtown, is part of the urban core. As such, new development within that area should expect to respond to the overall urban character by setting new buildings next to the sidewalk, placing parking to the rear, and designing buildings that fit the overall character of the area.

The identified Mixed Use areas are:

- Kanza Education and Science Park/Hummer Sports Park
- River Hill/former Menninger campus
- White Lakes Mall
- Heartland Park
- Kansas Avenue (south of Downtown – SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street)
- College Hill Redevelopment area (SW 17<sup>th</sup>/Washburn/Lane)
- West of Wanamaker Road (SW 10<sup>th</sup> – SW 21<sup>st</sup>)
- East of Wanamaker Road/SW 7<sup>th</sup> Street
- SW 53<sup>rd</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd. (Northwest corner) – Future

**Mixed Use Node** - A Mixed Use Node is a major intersection that exhibits two or fewer corners which are zoned or developed in a commercial manner. The non-commercial corners may have residential or office uses that demonstrates the mixed use nature of the intersection. The non-commercial corners may also be vacant and the Mixed Use Node designation shows the intent

that these corners develop in a non-commercial manner. The “nodal” development pattern is the ideal development or redevelopment pattern for the Mixed Use Nodes.

Mixed Use Nodes may have redevelopment potential of vacant buildings or land and are where mixed use commercial/residential developments could assist in providing an incentive for revitalization of the intersection. Mixing uses is appropriate within the same buildings or within the overall node. Per nodal principles, the highest intensity uses should develop closest to the intersection.

Medium and High Density Residential uses are appropriate within the mixed use area. While not considered a primary use within the mixed use area, Urban/Suburban Low Density Residential uses could also be appropriate provided they are correctly integrated with the other uses. The appropriate intensity level of commercial uses within mixed use area is Neighborhood Commercial, which should be developed in a nodal pattern at intersections rather than in a strip pattern along the street.

There are certain Mixed Use Nodes where building design and site layout considerations will be part of the review for new development. Items such as architectural form, building setbacks, street-level activity, connectivity, etc. will be taken into account. For instance, the Mixed Use Node at SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Topeka Blvd. is part of the urban core, and as such, new development within that node should expect to respond to the overall urban character by setting new buildings next to the sidewalk, placing parking to the rear, and designing facades that fit the character of the area.

There are two types of Mixed Use Nodes. A small Mixed Node contains 1-10 acres and is designated on the future land use map with a small purple circle. A large Mixed Use Node contains 10-20 acres and is designated on the future land use map with a larger purple circle. Mixed Use Nodes are located at the intersections of two major arterials and should generally encompass all four corners of the intersection. Large Mixed Use Nodes generally have approximately 20,000 - 40,000 Average Daily Trips (ADT) at the intersection. Small Mixed Use Nodes generally have approximately up to 20,000 Average Daily Trips at the intersection.

The identified Mixed Use Nodes with noted ADT from 2013 in parenthesis are below. ADT is approximate and some areas lacked data at the time this was studied.

- SW 37<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd. (17,000)
- SW 37<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Wanamaker Road (17,000)
- SW 37<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Burlingame Road (22,000)
- SW Fairlawn Road and SW 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- SW Urish Road and SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street (11,000)
- SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Topeka Blvd. (40,000)
- SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue and SW Topeka Blvd. (35,000)
- SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street and SW Washburn Avenue (36,000)



- SE Croco Road and SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street (18,000)
- SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street and SE Wittenberg Road (16,000)
- SW 17<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Washburn
- SW Oakley Avenue and SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street (13,000)
- SW Huntoon Street and SW Fairlawn Road
- SW 41<sup>st</sup> Street and SW Wanamaker Road (10,000)
- Southwest Parkway and SW Fairlawn Road – Future

**Commercial** – This category comprises areas that should develop for predominately commercial uses in the ideal “nodal” pattern. A commercial node is an intersection with 3 or more corners with zoned or existing commercial development. This category also designates certain large commercial areas that have not developed in the ideal “nodal” pattern.

Commercial areas are categorized as the following: “Regional”, “Community”, and “Neighborhood” based upon their location, the Average Daily Trips at the intersection, the amount of existing commercially zoned acreage at the center, functional street classification, number of neighborhoods served, proximity to other commercial centers, and the pattern of surrounding land uses. The scale of the “node” on the land use map denotes the type of commercial center designated for the area.

A less intense zoning district should exist between the commercial center and low density residential uses, such as Office or Medium/High Density Residential, to allow a stepping down in the intensity of land uses. Commercial centers should be integrated and connected to the surrounding residential neighborhoods by including pedestrian access, appropriate transitional elements, and building designs that are compatible with the architecture of the neighborhood. Commercial building designs should reflect the context of the neighborhood where the development is located. Intensifying or expanding existing commercial centers along the arterial road that will exacerbate strip commercialization is discouraged.

Even though the dominate character of a node intersection or an area is commercial, that shouldn’t preclude mixing uses as a component of a development or redevelopment of the node or the area. Creative projects that propose to mix uses, and that fit the overall context of the node or area, and comply with the policies of this Plan, should be supported.

The following types of commercial centers denoted on the map are described as follows:

Regional Commercial - This area contains the Wanamaker Commercial Corridor. Regional Commercial Centers provide uses on a broader scale and mix than the other commercial centers and serve a population beyond the City, drawing from surrounding cities and counties.

Community Commercial - These areas contain large-scale commercial uses that serve multiple neighborhoods in the city with goods and services, large traffic generators, and usually at least 30 acres of land area. Typical uses found in these centers include: Super

center discount stores; hardware stores; drug stores; lumber yards, home improvement stores; movie theaters; and sporting goods stores. "Big box" retail establishments are appropriate in these areas, but should be developed so that there is limited impact upon any surrounding neighborhoods of less intense zoning regarding traffic, noise and visual clutter. Areas designated for community commercial on the map may still draw from surrounding communities and counties for limited goods and services, such as: Hotels and highway commercial uses (e.g. U.S. 24 Highway and South Topeka Boulevard for automobile dealerships, tractor/farm, etc.). Lower intensity industrial zoning/uses may be appropriate within community commercial areas whose existing character reflects a heavy commercial/industrial mixed land use arrangement.

Community Commercial nodes are located at the intersections of two major arterials and should generally encompass all four corners of the intersection. Community Commercial areas generally also have approximately 30,000 - 40,000 Average Daily Trips (ADT) at the intersection.

The identified Community Commercial areas with noted ADT from 2013 in parenthesis are below. ADT is approximate and some areas lacked data at the time this was studied.

- SW Topeka Blvd. and SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street (36,000)
- SW Fairlawn Rd., SW 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Interstate 70 (I-70 -65,000, Fairlawn – 11,500)
- SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street and SE California Avenue
- SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd. (40,000)
- SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd. (35,000)
- SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street and SW Fairlawn Avenue (35,000)
- SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street, SW Fairlawn Avenue, Interstate 470 (I-470 - 42,000, 29<sup>th</sup> – 26,000)
- SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Wanamaker Road (30,000)
- SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and SE California Avenue
- SE California Avenue – SE 25<sup>th</sup> Street to SE 29<sup>th</sup> Street
- SW Topeka Blvd. – SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street to SW 57<sup>th</sup> Street
- US Highway 24 – NE Meriden Road to NW Vail Avenue
- SW Huntoon Street/SW 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Gage Blvd. (30,000)
- SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd. (32,000)

Neighborhood Commercial - These areas contain commercial uses that serve the nearest neighborhoods or a single neighborhood and are designed for short traffic trips and pedestrians. Neighborhood Commercial Centers are denoted on the future land use map as either "Small Neighborhood" or "Large Neighborhood". Small Neighborhood Centers contain 1-10 acres of land area and draw traffic from a single neighborhood. Small Neighborhood Nodes are noted on the future land use map as small red circles. Large Neighborhood Centers may contain anywhere from 10-20 acres maximum land area and draw traffic from multiple neighborhoods. Large Neighborhood Node are identifies on the future land use map by a larger red circle.

The ideal location for new Small or Large Neighborhood Commercial Centers is at minor arterial/minor arterial or minor arterial/collector intersections with development not always located at all corners of the intersection. Small neighborhood commercial centers may be located at only one corner with residential/office/mixed use on the opposite corners. Large neighborhood commercial centers are generally at more than one corner.

New large neighborhood commercial centers are primarily located at minor/minor arterial or minor/major arterial intersections and spaced 1-mile apart. Development may either be at one corner of the intersection or more than one corner depending upon the pattern of surrounding land uses. Small neighborhood commercial centers may be spaced ½ mile between arterial intersections at only one corner of the intersection or at an arterial/collector intersection.

Large Neighborhood Commercial Centers also generally have at least 20,000 Average Daily Trips (ADT) at the intersection. Small Neighborhood Commercial Centers generally have approximately 10,000 – 20,000 ADT at the intersection.

The identified Neighborhood Commercial Centers with noted ADT from 2013 in parenthesis are below. ADT is approximate and some areas lacked data at the time this was studied.

- SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street and SW MacVicar Avenue (19,000)
- SW Huntoon Street and SW Oakley Avenue (8,000)
- SW Gage Blvd. and Interstate 470
- SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Fairlawn Road (19,000)
- Brookwood – SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Oakley Avenue (18,000)
- SW 21<sup>st</sup> Street and SW Randolph Avenue (3,410)
- SE 21<sup>st</sup> Street and SE California Avenue (27,000)
- SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street and Urish Road (20,000)
- SE 37<sup>th</sup> Street and SE Adams Street
- SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and SE Adams Street (5,000)
- SE 45<sup>th</sup> Street and SE Croco Road



N-hood Commercial Node – Huntoon and Oakley

- SW 45<sup>th</sup> Street and SW Gage Blvd.
- SW Arrowhead Road and SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street (24,000)

**Existing Strip Commercial Areas** - The future land use map also recognizes those existing Neighborhood and Community Commercial Centers, which have not developed according to the ideal “nodal” land use arrangement. These areas exhibit some negative common characteristics that define them as “strip commercial.” Strip commercial areas are generally located between two intersections or extend out linearly along the corridor from the intersection. Commercial uses may also only be located along one side of the corridor’s frontage (i.e. SW Gage). This category is not intended to encourage the development of new strip commercial areas, but to provide design criteria for the redevelopment of existing strip commercial areas so as not to exacerbate strip commercialization.

This category recognizes these areas where there is already a cohesive display of commercial uses or commercial zoning fronting along the arterial street rather than being developed within near proximity to the intersection, as defined under “Nodal Areas”. “Strip Commercial” is defined as those areas that have developed in many cases with narrow lot frontages, shallow lot depths, and backing-up to residential areas. Driveway openings along the arterial, parking lots, and limited landscape buffering along street frontages are dominant in these older strip commercial areas. Strip commercial areas require unique consideration when opportunities for redevelopment arise because of negative consequences that arise from stripping out arterials with commercial uses. Many strip commercial areas were developed prior to current access management and street design criteria, which regulate the driveway spacing and location of access points. In many cases, these areas were also developed prior to current subdivision platting criteria generally requiring cross access between adjacent commercial lots and prior to landscape buffer requirements. Strip commercialization commonly exhibits the following undesirable consequences, such as:

- A degradation of the primary purpose of the arterial’s ability to move traffic;
- An increase in automobile related accidents as the number of driveways intersecting the arterial street increases;
- Excessive public costs due to the need for traffic control devices;
- A reduction of residential property values adjacent to the strip of commercial development, which can ‘bleed’ into the neighborhood and result in a destabilizing effect on a large portion of the neighborhood;
- The difficulty of providing for the expansion of businesses that have developed in a strip pattern adjacent to residential development;
- A lowering of commercial shopping center values as an excessive amount of commercial real estate is placed on the market;
- An excessive amount of ‘secondary’ retail establishments being located in prime retail locations as the market becomes over saturated with commercial land.

These existing strip commercial areas are denoted on the future land use map because they require special redevelopment considerations in order to lessen the effects of these undesirable results. Generally, these strip areas should not expand further along the arterial street, encroach into the surrounding residential areas, or expand across the street if the opposing street frontage is predominately residential. Redevelopment plans along these corridors should address curb cut consolidation, shared driveways, cross access easements, internal frontage roads, landscape buffers along street frontages, and incorporate appropriate buffering between the commercial and residential uses. Techniques that may assist in reducing the intensity of new stand-alone commercial developments along strip commercial frontages is to provide a mix uses within single buildings to lessen the presence of one commercial building from the street and reduce the commercial intensity.

**Public/Quasi Public** – This category may include schools, colleges, other educational institutions, government institutions, transportation facilities, public utilities. Adaptive re-use of existing public/quasi-public facilities for other compatible uses; such as, community centers, religious assembly, multi-family residential, mixed-use, or office; may be encouraged if these public facilities are abandoned based upon the pattern of land uses in the surrounding area.

**Industrial** – This category comprises both light and heavy industrial uses. The areas are generally located at sites with available transportation access; including rail, air, and roadways; with limited slopes and suitable topography for large scale distribution and warehousing centers. All infrastructure services are generally readily available at these sites or can be extended without significant constraints.

**Downtown** – This category comprises the those areas bounded by the Kansas River (north), Topeka Blvd (west), Adams (east), and 12<sup>th</sup>/Huntoon (South). This area is classified as Topeka's Central Business District and should continue to encourage the development of Downtown as an office, regional employment, and commercial center. However, Downtown should also be redeveloped for a mix of uses that include retail, high density residential, and loft conversions. Kansas Avenue should continue to be redeveloped as the primary Downtown commercial corridor and provide a mix of uses. A residential component is critical to the redevelopment of Downtown. Pedestrian oriented uses, such as retail, restaurants, galleries, and entertainment, should be promoted on the ground floor of high density residential buildings. New Downtown buildings should reflect the historic component of Kansas Avenue. Redevelopment plans for Downtown should further incorporate the Kansas River as an element of Downtown revitalization by establishing a waterfront park.

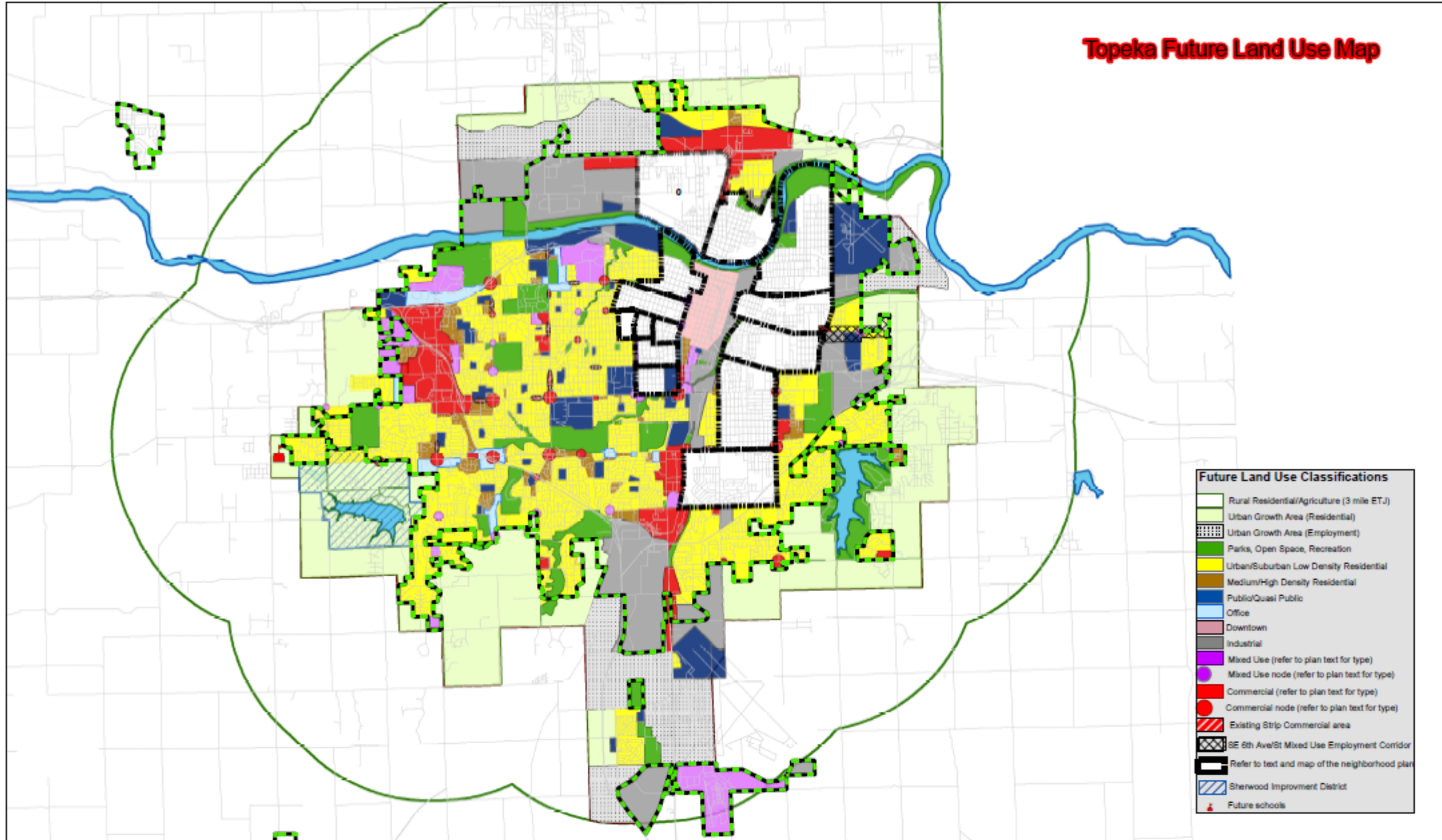
**SE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Street Mixed Use Employment Corridor** – This category applies to the mixed use employment corridor along SE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Street from Deer Creek Parkway to SE Croco Road. A key consideration for this designation is that this area already has mixture of employment related uses, some that are large-scale employers. A portion of the corridor lies with the existing city boundary where all 5 urban services (fire, police, water, sewer, and roads) are

present. The area that lies outside the city, but within the Topeka Urban Growth Area, also has all 5 urban services present and available for urban development.

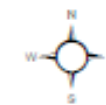
The continued development of this corridor for mixed use employment related land use generates significant return on the investment the community has made in infrastructure and services and continues the large/small-scale residential/non-residential character along SE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Street corridor.

This category permits employment related land use if developed as a Planned Unit Development (PUD) with high standards to mitigate the impacts of the industry from residential. The standards should include landscaping, site design, operational and building design considerations that meet the goal of a “clean” land compatible to surrounding properties while promoting a visually appealing mixed-use corridor linked to the regional transportation network.

Map #3 – Topeka Future Land Use



The Future Land Use Map only provides a broad brush approach and is not intended to be a site specific guide for each individual lot or parcel nor is it a zoning map. There may be smaller parcels suitable for uses other than what is depicted on the map. Site specific development proposals and rezoning requests should follow more specific area, corridor, and neighborhood plans, as well as, the Golden criteria.



Map Adopted by Topeka City Council - January 10, 2017





## VI. Implementation Summary

### a. Infrastructure

- As stated earlier in this Plan, the greatest incentive the city has to promote development is where it chooses to spend infrastructure/arterial road investments.
- CIP and ½ cent sales taxes should follow the priorities of this Plan and the Neighborhood Health Map.
- Neighborhood and other specific plans will identify specific areas that could be potential infill and redevelopment projects that promote an economically sustainable footprint. Here is a sampling of infill/redevelopment areas that could be mixed use areas and have good return on investments if redeveloped:
  - **Downtown Topeka** – Downtown Topeka is currently receiving an investment of nearly \$10 million to redevelop and improve the area along S. Kansas Ave. from SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. to SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave. Other areas of downtown available for infill development include its southeast area, also known as the Water Tower District, the southwest area, fronting along S. Topeka Blvd, the riverfront, and NOTO. Further, the future realignment of the I-70 Polk/Quincy viaduct will create additional areas for reinvestment. Mixed-use development is a priority in Downtown, including commercial, office, and higher density residential land uses. More housing is critical for the revitalization of these areas.
  - **I-470 & SW Fairlawn**
  - **SW Huntoon St. and SW Fairlawn Rd**
  - **Chatham Street/Washburn Tech**
  - **White Lakes Mall**
  - **Fremont Hill**
  - **East Topeka Jr. High**
- All new or expanded public facilities in CIP must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; rehabilitation of existing facilities is automatically consistent unless shown to have more cost-effective and sustainable options.

### b. Regulatory (Rules)

- Make changes to Topeka’s Subdivision and Utility Rules to implement the goals and policies of this Plan.
  - Subdivision Regulations
    - 20-acre minimum lot size
    - Connectivity

- Utility Rules
    - Annexation Exemption update
    - Consent to annexation within 3-mile Area.
- c. Fiscal Incentives
- Neighborhood Revitalization Program
  - Historic Tax Credits
  - Stages of Resource Targeting (SORT)
  - Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
  - Community Improvement Districts (CID)
  - Consider lowering utilities fees to connect to City water or sewer infrastructure within Tier 1.
- d. Annexation Program
- a. Contiguous Unilateral Parcels within Tier 2 should be annexed when all 5 urban services can be cost-effectively provided and annexing these areas makes the City more compact.
    - Identify contiguous Consent Parcels and forward ordinances to the Governing Body for approval as appropriate (See Annexation Program Map in Appendix).
    - Identify contiguous Non-Consent Unilateral Parcels and proceed through the public hearing process for Governing Body approval.
    - Evaluate other Non-Consent Unilateral Parcels that have rural water service or are not contiguous to determine if annexation is cost-beneficial for the City.
    - Evaluate undeveloped growth areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan to determine if proactive unilateral annexation prior to development is beneficial for the City.
    - Update LUGMP 2040 as appropriate when Tier 3 graduates to Tier 2.
- e. Area/Sector Plans
- Develop Area/Sector Plans for Topeka’s new growth areas that focus on setting future land use policies and developing specific annexation policies for the areas.

## **VII. Comprehensive Plan Update and Amendment Process**

The Comprehensive Plan is not a static document; the planning process must be continuous. The Plan should be monitored and updated on a regular basis. The need for Plan amendments is the result of many community influences. Most frequently these are brought about by changes in attitudes, assumptions or emerging needs not foreseen at the time of Plan adoption. The following procedures would apply to any amendment of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **a. Types of Plans**

Long-range planning in an area specific manner is an important aspect of the overall community planning process. Specific plans provide the focused guidance necessary for proper decision making regarding an area's future.

The foundation for plans prepared for a specific area is the general policies of the Comprehensive Plan. However, specific plans contain more detailed policy guidance for those areas. When adopted, Specific Plans are considered Comprehensive Plan policy and become elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

The following are types of Specific Plans that can be used for the long-range planning of the community.

#### Area/Sector Plans

Area/Sector Plans are specific plans for Topeka's new growth areas. Area/Sector Plans focus on setting future land use policies and developing specific annexation policies for the area.

#### Neighborhood Plans

Neighborhood Plans are specific plans for existing Topeka neighborhoods. These plans develop policy guidance on a range of issues specific to the particular neighborhood.

#### Infill/Redevelopment Plan

Infill/Redevelopment Plans are plans for a specific property or group of properties. These plans evaluate a specific land use proposal and whether it fits into the overall character and pattern of the area. This plan also evaluates available city services to determine if the project can be adequately served. For instance, can the downstream wastewater system handle the intensified use of the property?

#### Special Issue Plan

This plan category covers those areas or issues that don't fit into the previous categories. For example, this could include a corridor plan for a roadway.

## **b. Timing of Plan Review**

Although a proposal to amend the Plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the Topeka Planning Commission should undertake a thorough review of the Plan on a regular basis. The continuous nature of the Comprehensive Planning process should be emphasized so that plan review and update may occur 1-2 years. Ideally, the review would coincide with the annual review of anticipated capital improvements planning.

## **c. Plan Amendment Procedures and Criteria**

### **i. Amendments**

All proposed amendments shall be subject to public hearing by the Topeka Planning Commission and approved by the Topeka Governing Body.

### **ii. All proposed amendments to the Plan shall consider the following:**

- a) The proposed amendment results from changed circumstances or unforeseen conditions not understood or addressed at the time the Plan was adopted.
- b) The proposed amendment advances a clear public purpose and is consistent with the long-range goals and policies of the Plan.
- c) The proposed amendment results from a clear change in public policy.

### **iii. Map Amendments**

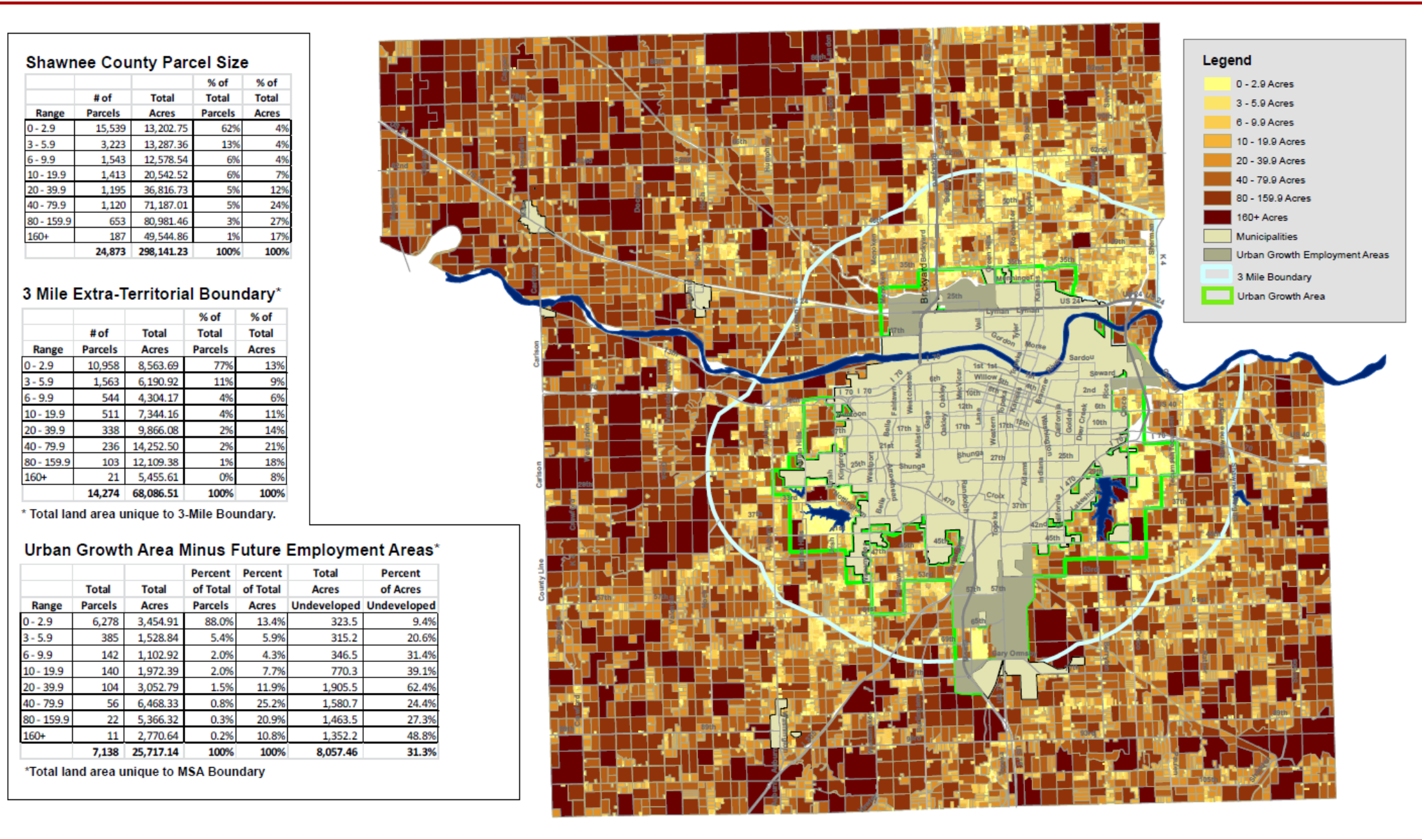
Subject to hearing, review and recommendation of the Topeka Planning Commission, the governing body may adopt proposed amendments to Topeka Plan Maps upon findings that each of the following additional criteria are met:

- a) The proposed change is significant. Minor changes shall be reflected under next major update.
- b) The proposed amendment does not affect the adequacy of existing or planned facilities and services;
- c) The proposed change results in reasonably compatible land use relationships; and
- d) The proposed change advances the interests of the citizens of Topeka as a whole, not solely those having immediate interest in the affected area.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 or a change to UGA boundaries occur with CIP process.

Appendix Maps

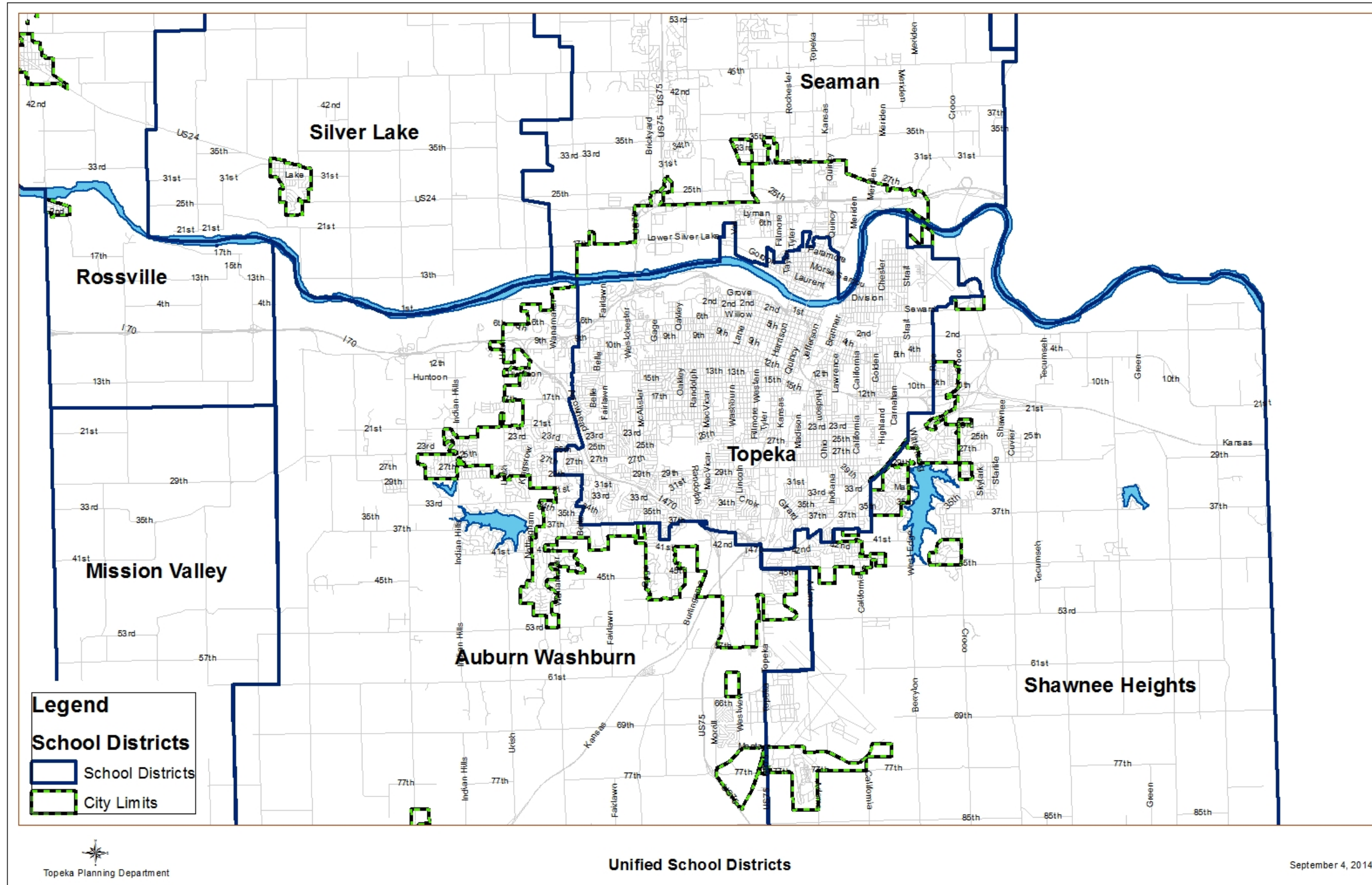
Shawnee County Parcel Size and Urban Growth Area Development Status



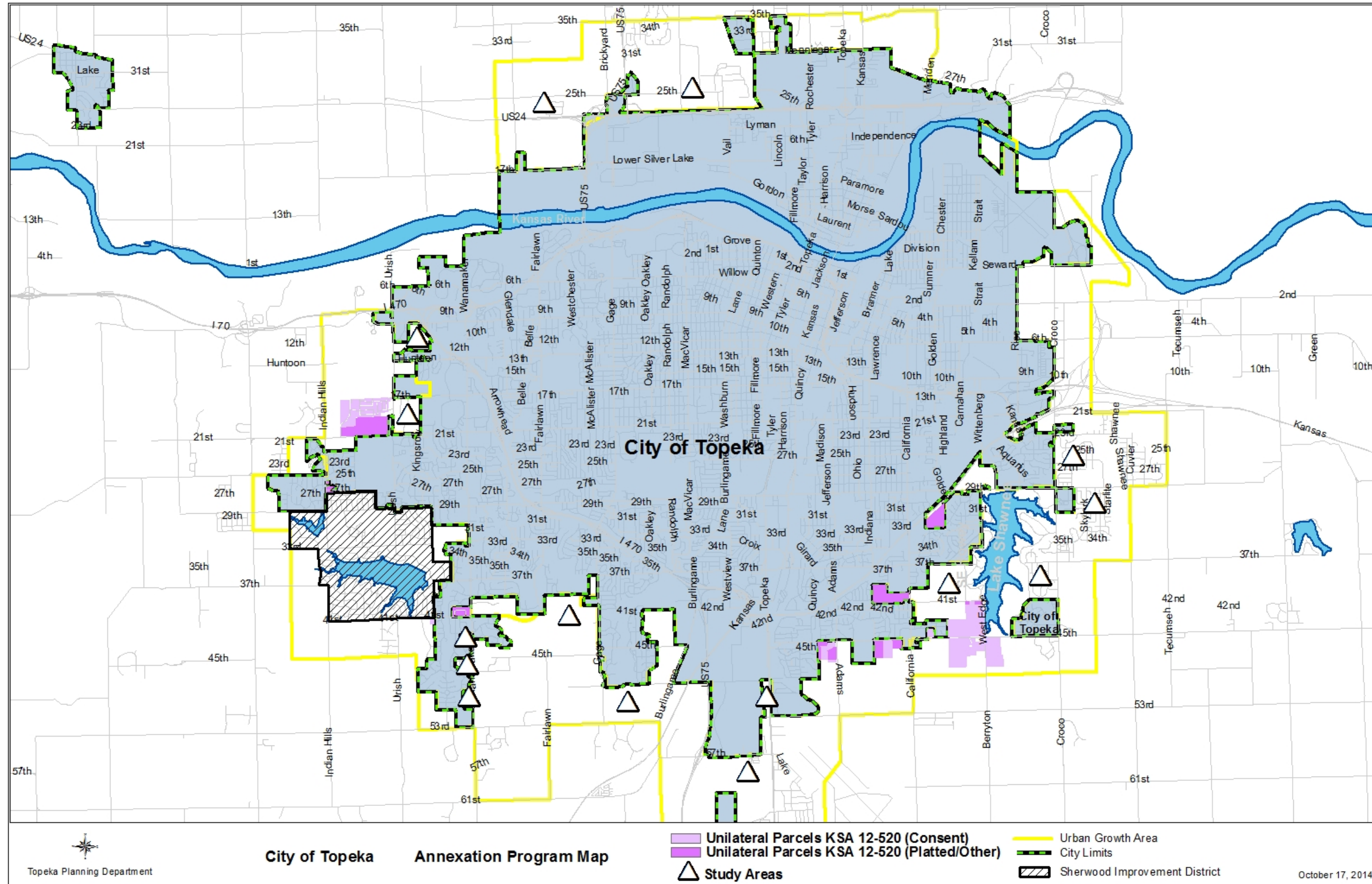
Shawnee County Parcel Size and Urban Growth Area Development Status

September 15, 2014

Unified School Districts



Annexation Program Map



Primary Service Area from Previously Adopted Wastewater Management Plans

