

**An Area Plan for the Intersection Area
of West 6th Street & Wakarusa Drive
City of Lawrence, Kansas**

December 2003

Approved by the Lawrence City Commission on December 2, 2003

AREA PLAN
West 6th Street & Wakarusa Drive

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Introduction

Background & Purpose

The purpose of this small area plan is to help ensure appropriate and compatible development of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection. This intersection is currently designated appropriate as a Community Commercial Center in Horizon 2020, the comprehensive, long-range plan for the City of Lawrence and unincorporated Douglas County. The south side of the intersection has developed into a commercial node and the Lawrence City Commission has directed Planning staff to develop a plan ensuring the north side of the intersection does not become oversaturated with commercial, primary retail, development.

An area plan is a useful planning tool intended as a furtherance of a more generalized long-range plan, such as Horizon 2020. Area plans are site-specific plans of an area whose purpose is to ensure appropriate and compatible development of an area. This area plan also intends to encourage development that is consistent with the goals and policies found in Horizon 2020 and that development is non-intrusive to surrounding neighborhoods.

Description of Study Area

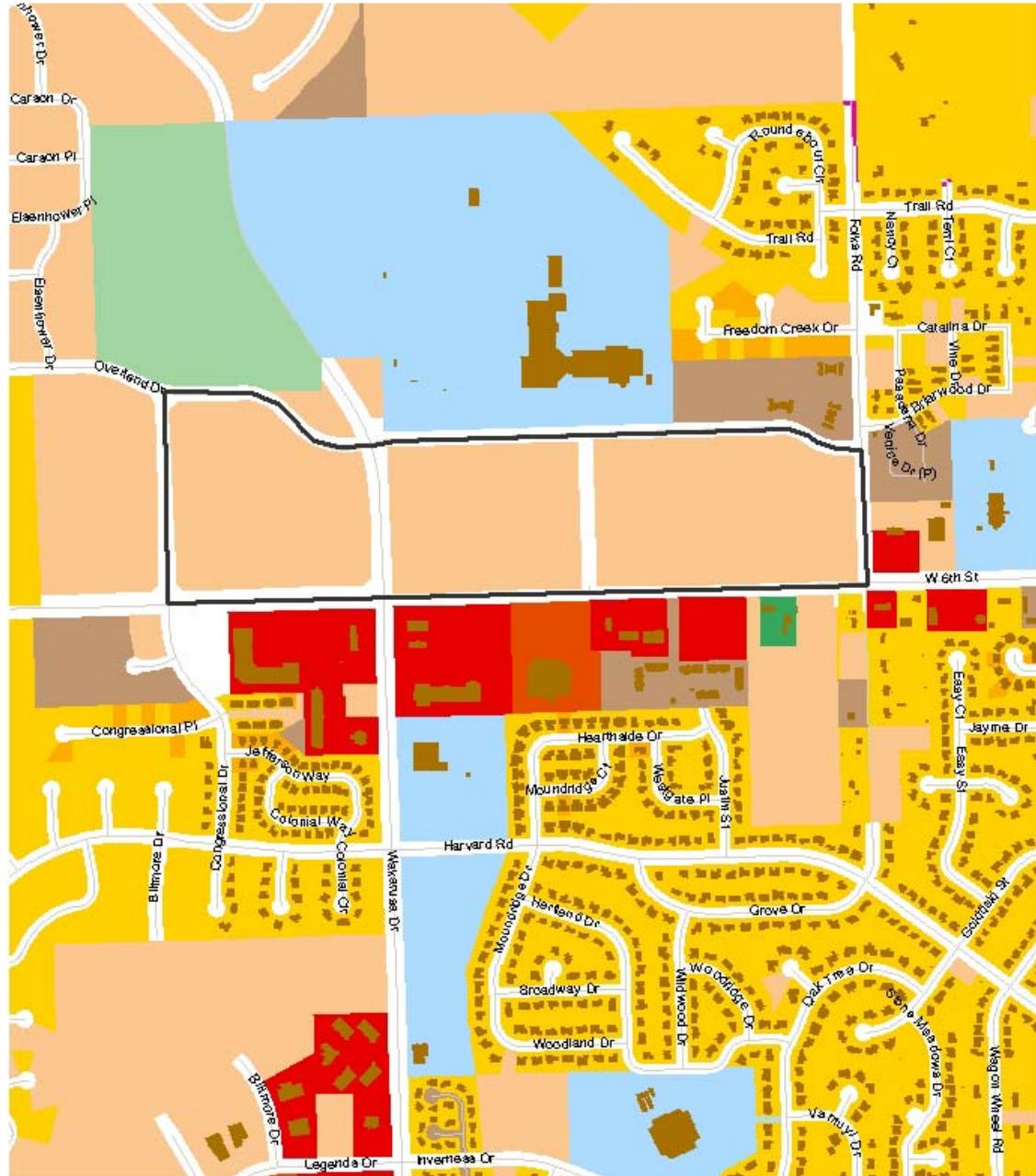
The study area for this plan is an area bounded to the west by Congressional Drive; to the north by Overland Drive; to the east by Folks Road; and to the south by West 6th Street. The study area includes the north half of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection. The study area is located in Township 12 S, Range 19 E, Section 28, which is located in northwest Lawrence. The study area encompasses approximately eighty (80) acres (one-eighth of a mile). Refer to Figure 1 for the location of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection. The study area is currently undeveloped, but is surrounded on three sides by urban development. The western portion of the study area lies within the West Lawrence Neighborhood Association.

Figure 1 Study Area 6th & Wakarusa Dr.



Legend

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cemetery | Public/Institutional |
| Commercial | Single Family |
| Farm | Parking/Utilities/Transportation |
| Industrial Warehouse | Duplex/Triples/Fourplex |
| Multiple Family | Vacant |
| Parks/Rec - Open Space | Study Area |



Date: June 23, 2003

Existing Conditions

The first step in development of this area plan was an inventory of existing conditions at the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. An analysis of those conditions as they relate to the future development of this study area was conducted by Planning staff. The inventory and analysis of existing conditions in this plan are intended to serve as a guide and to act as a support mechanism for the recommendations outlined at the end of this plan.

Existing Land Uses

As mentioned previously, the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area is currently undeveloped but is surrounded by urban development to the north, east, and south. The study area is surrounded by a variety of land uses in various stages of development: to the north is the Free State High School campus and Indoor Aquatic Center; to the northeast is residential, comprising of single- and multiple-family dwellings; to the east are banks and offices; to the southeast is residential, primarily single-family dwellings; to the south and southwest is commercial retail; to the west is vacant, undeveloped land with proposals for multiple-family residential development; and to the northwest is parkland and a developing single-family residential neighborhood.

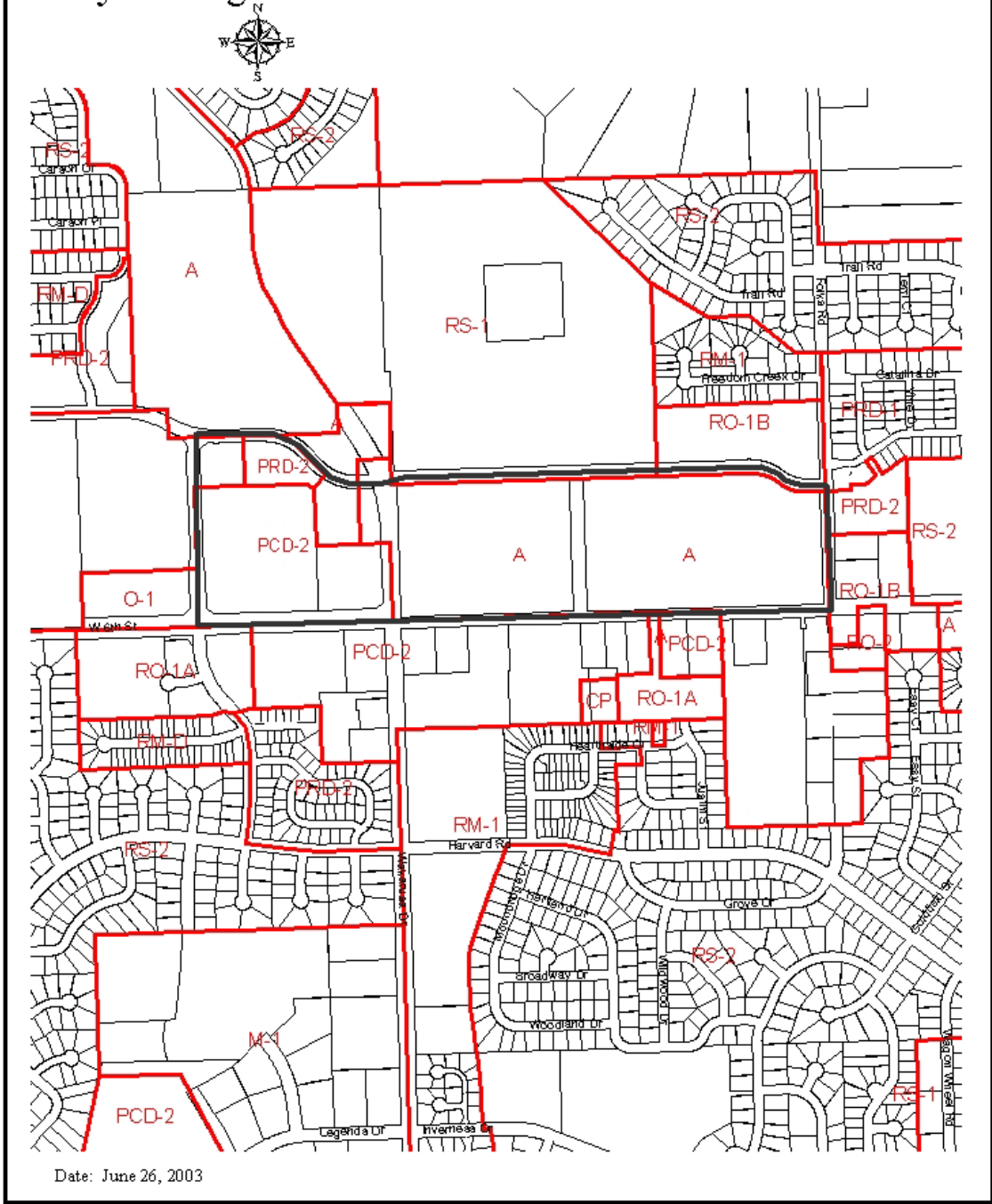
Existing Zoning Patterns

The entire study area lies within the corporate limits of the City of Lawrence. The land east of Wakarusa Drive is currently zoned A, Agricultural, and encompasses approximately fifty-three (53) acres. This is a Douglas County zoning district, which was retained upon annexation into the City. The land west of Wakarusa Drive has multiple zoning designations and encompasses approximately twenty-seven (27) acres. The majority of the western portion is zoned PCD-2, Planned Commercial Development, and the remaining portions zoned PRD-2, Planned Residential Development, and A, Agricultural.

There are a variety of zoning designations surrounding the study area. The areas to the north and northeast have primarily residential zoning designations, including RS-1 (Single-Family), RS-2, RM-1 (Multiple-Family), RO-1B (Residential-Office), and PRD-1. The areas to the east and southeast have primarily residential-office zoning designations, including RO-1B, RO-2, PRD-2, and A. The areas to the south and southwest have commercial and office zoning designations, including O-1 (Office), RO-1A, and PCD-2. The areas to the west and northwest have primarily residential designations, including RS-2, RM-D (Duplex), PRD-2, and A.

Zoning classifications for the study area and its surroundings are illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2 City Zoning Classifications







Future Land Use/UGA Designation

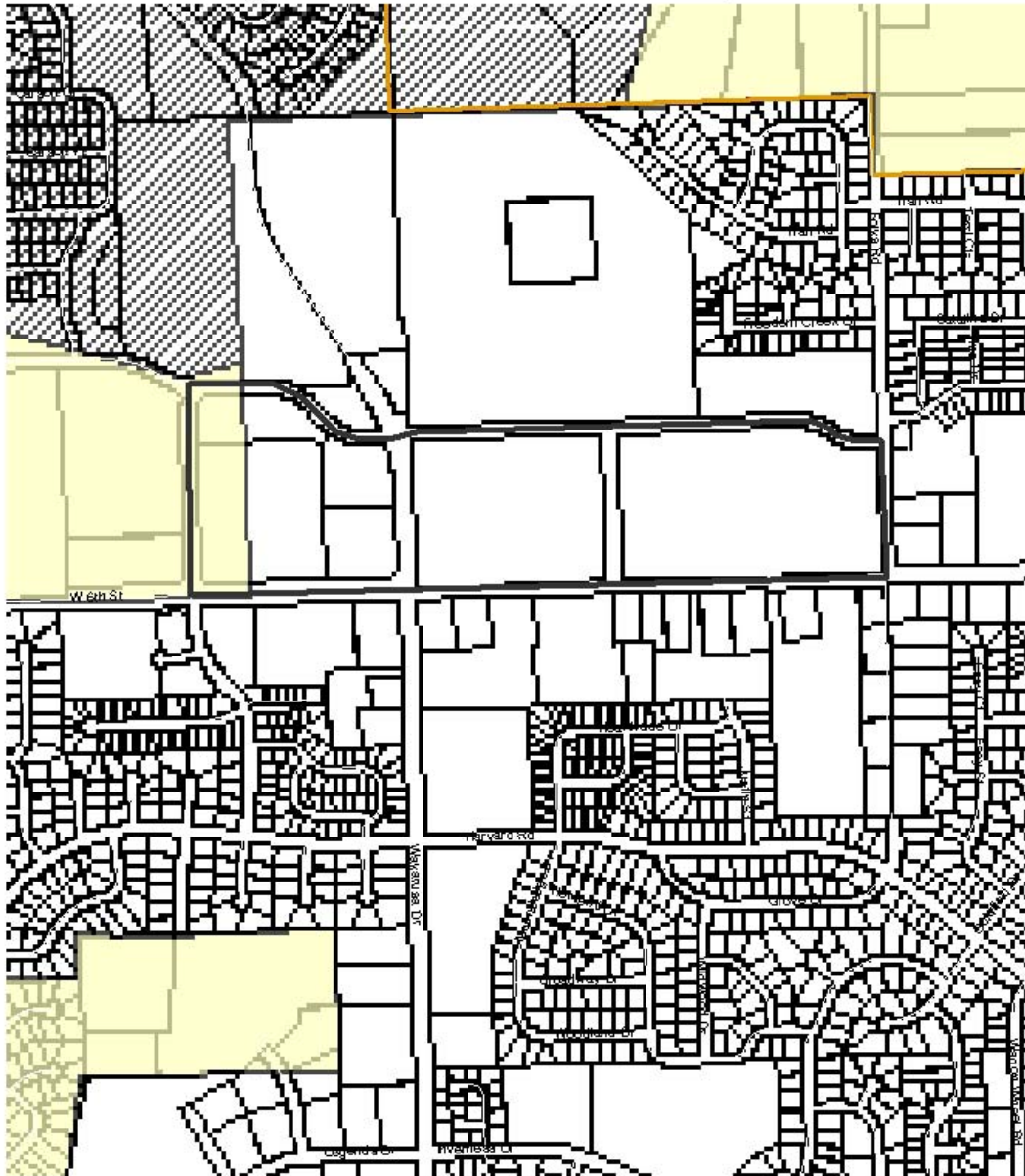
The following is a brief summary of the future land uses for this area as they were initially generated. Two land use plans have been developed that influence the future development of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area: Horizon 2020 and the Northwest Plan. Horizon 2020 identifies that portions of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection are appropriate for a Community Commercial Center. In the areas east of Wakarusa Drive, the majority has been designated appropriate for office uses. A small portion of this area has been designated appropriate for office or commercial uses. In the areas west of Wakarusa Drive, low-density residential uses are designated to be appropriate. Land use designations come from Figure 9 (Lawrence Urban Growth Area, Service Areas, and Future Land Use) and Figure 9.Inset (Lawrence Future Land Use).

Land use designations from Horizon 2020 for the study area are illustrated in Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3
Horizon 2020 (Figure 9)
Landuses

Legend

- | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Service Area 2 |  | Industrial |
|  | Service Area 3a |  | Low density residential |
|  | Service Area 3b |  | Mixed use |
|  | Service Area 4 |  | Office/public |
|  | Higher density residential |  | Parks/open space |
|  | Study Area | | |

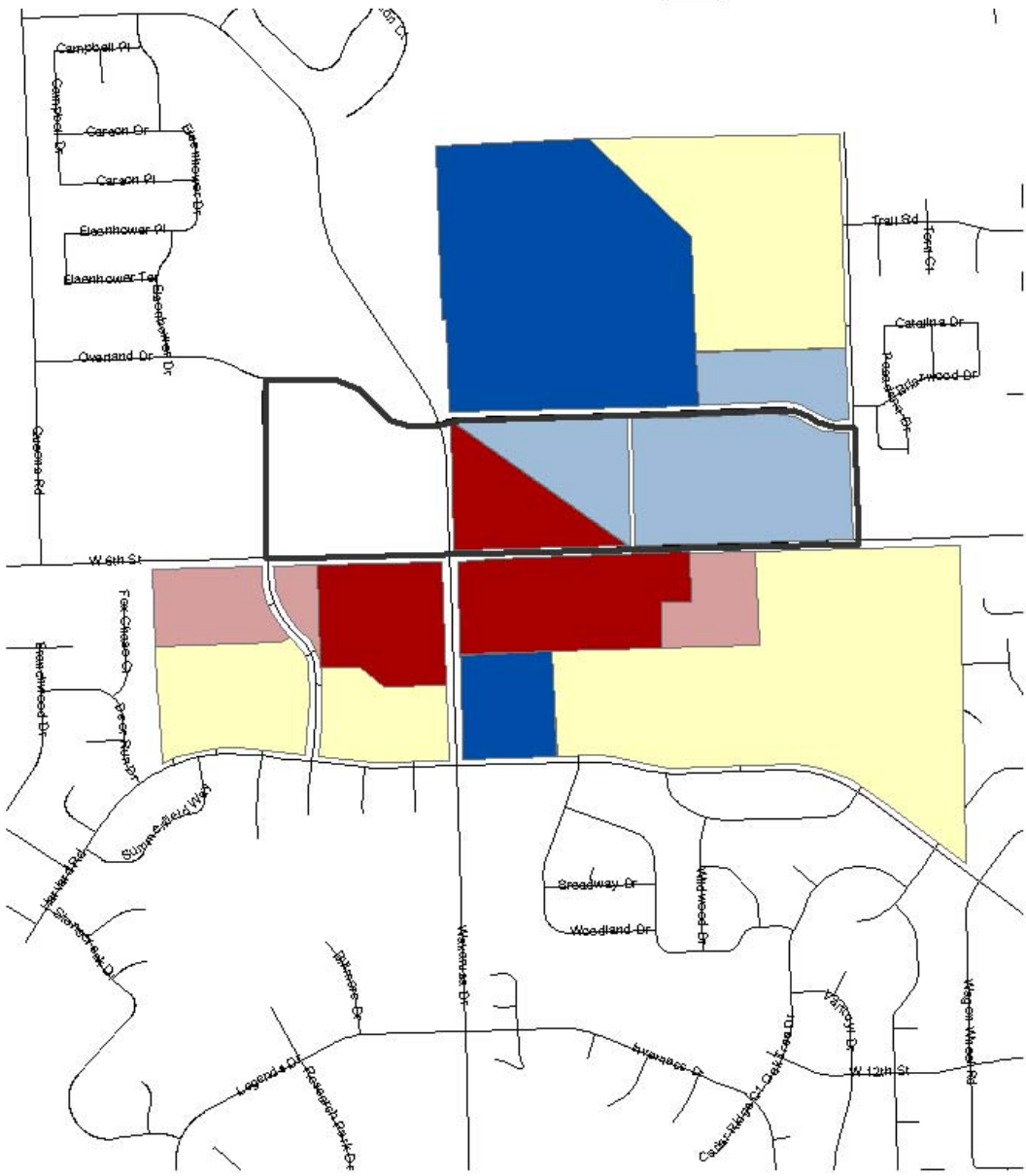


Date: June 23, 2003

Figure 4
Horizon 2020 (Figure 9 Inset)
Landuses



- Very Low Density Residential
Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
High Density Residential
- Office
- Office and/or Commercial
- Community Facility (Public/Semi-Public)
- Study Area

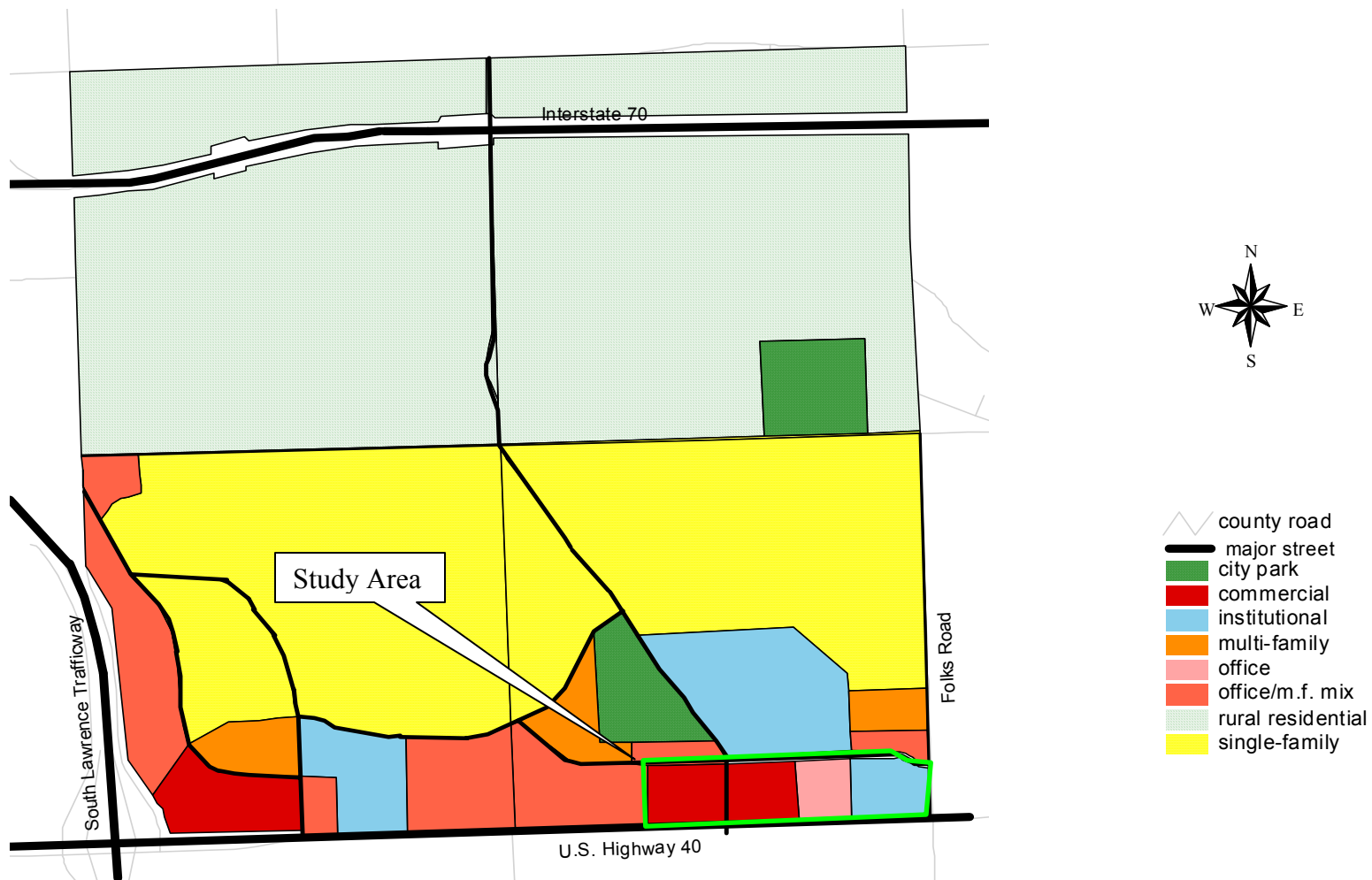


Date: June 23, 2003

The Northwest Plan is the most recent, detailed guide for the future land use and development for the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. While the study area only represents a small portion of the Northwest Plan study area, the Northwest Plan has a direct influence on recommended land uses for the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. Both the northwest and northeast corners of the intersection are designated appropriate for commercial uses. The remaining area between Wakarusa Drive and Folks Road has been designated appropriate for office and institutional uses, with institutional uses at the northwest intersection of West 6th Street and Folks Road.

Land use designations from the Northwest Plan for the study area are illustrated in Figure 5.

The Northwest Area Proposed Land Uses



Note: Actual environmental conditions which place constraints on development are not shown on this map. Refer to the comprehensive plan for guidance on environmental condition maps, studies and policies.

Lawrence-Douglas County Metropolitan Planning Office
October 2, 1996

Environmental Conditions

The entire West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area is, or previously had been, agricultural pasture and range land. The study area is relatively flat, moderately sloping downhill to the north and west from its highest point at the northwest corner of the West 6th Street/Folks Road intersection. Along the western edge of the study area lie the upper reaches of a naturally occurring drainage channel, which is part of the Baldwin Creek Drainage Basin. This drainage channel flows into naturally maintained parkland located northwest of the study area. Since the study area is situated already within an increasingly urbanizing area of the city, no other major environmental features are present.

Public Services

The West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area is currently served by city infrastructure and services. Sanitary sewer service is available to all areas of the study area. In those areas east of Wakarusa Drive, sewer service is available from the north, east, and southwest. In those areas west of Wakarusa Drive, sewer service is available from the Baldwin Creek Sewer Benefit District located to the north. Water service is also readily available. In those areas east of Wakarusa Drive, water service is available from all sides. In those areas west of Wakarusa Drive, water service is available from the east and south.

Improvements are planned for West 6th Street beginning in 2004, west of Folks Road, which will widen the street from two-lanes to four-lanes with a separated recreational path. As part of these improvements, water lines will be extended making water service available to the western portion of the study area more accessible on its southern and western edges. The improvements to West 6th Street are anticipated to be completed in 2006. In conjunction with the West 6th Street improvements, Wakarusa Drive is also being improved between West 6th Street and Overland Drive.

Circulation & Access

West 6th Street and Wakarusa Drive are the arterial streets providing primary access to the study area: West 6th Street, along the southern edge of the study area, provides east-west access; Wakarusa Drive, cutting through the study area, provides north-south access. Secondary access is also provided to the study area from secondary arterial and/or collector streets: Congressional Drive, along the western edge, provides access from the south; Folks Road, along the eastern edge, provides access from the north; Overland Drive, along the northern edge, provides east-west access. Champion Lane is anticipated to provide access to the properties between Wakarusa Drive and Folks Road.

West 6th Street also serves as US Highway 40 and connects to Kansas Highway 10 (K-10) (also referred to as the South Lawrence Trafficway or SLT), which is located within two miles of the study area. This close proximity makes the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area easily accessible to the community's regional transportation network, including the Kansas Turnpike/Interstate 70 and US Highway 59.

Bike paths, sidewalks, and multiple-use recreational trails are located throughout the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. A ten-foot (10') wide recreation path on the south side of

West 6th Street is planned with the road improvement/widening project. The study area is also served by Lawrence Public Transit.

Envisioned Future

This section of the plan involves a summary of the existing plans and improvement projects of the City's future specifically as they relate to the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection and its future development. This summary of the future visions and improvements is intended to serve as a guide and act as a support mechanism for the recommendations outlined in this area plan.

Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 is the long-range plan for Douglas County and the City of Lawrence, outlining future land use growth and development over the next twenty years. This plan was developed during the mid-1990s utilizing a community-wide public participation process allowing the residents of the community to envision what they would like their hometown to be in the future. This part of the study looks at the existing intent of Horizon 2020, specifically Chapter 6, Commercial Land Use, as it relates to development at the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection. Also identified are those relevant goals found in the other chapters of Horizon 2020 related to the planned development of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection.

Existing Chapter 6, Commercial Land Use in Horizon 2020

The current commercial land use element in Horizon 2020 identifies the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection as appropriate for a Community Commercial Center since such centers should be located at arterial street intersections. These centers typically require ten to thirty acre sites to accommodate buildings, parking areas, and open spaces. They generally contain leasable space of 150,000 gross square feet (gsf) but may range from 100,000gsf to 450,000gsf, and can include a food/drug store along with a mix of retail and other uses and usually anchored with a small retail sales store type tenant.

There is approximately 380,000gsf of retail space currently approved at the intersection of West 6th Street and Wakarusa Drive. This includes existing and proposed developments. This is 130,000gsf more than the "typical" amount of retail square footage and 70,000gsf below the "typical" amount recommended by Horizon 2020 for a Community Commercial Center. Areas that are designated Community Commercial Centers do not necessarily infer a large-scale commercial development. These areas are intended to concentrate commercial development of the community, however, "leapfrog" development from the contiguous urbanized area of the community is discouraged. Centers are intended to be easily accessible from surrounding neighborhoods.

Relevant goals and policies related to the development of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive nodal study area come from Chapter 6, Commercial Land Use and include the following. For a more detailed look at the goals and policies, refer to Horizon 2020.

- **Goal 2: Compatible Transition from Commercial Development to Less Intensive Uses.**
Ensure compatible transition from commercial development to residential neighborhoods & other less intensive land uses.
 - **Policy 2.1: Use Appropriate Transitional Methods.**
 - **Policy 2.3: Higher-Density Residential Development as Transitional Use.**

- **Policy 2.5: Office, Research & Semi-Public Development as Transitional Use.**
- **Policy 2.6: Parks, Recreation & Open Space as Transitional Use.**
- **Goal 3: Criteria for Location of Commercial Development.** *Provide regional, community & neighborhood shopping opportunities to meet the commercial & retail needs of the community.*
 - **Policy 3.1: Utilize Locational Criteria for Commercial Development.**
 - **Policy 3.3: Utilize Locational Criteria for Community Centers.**
 - **Policy 3.7: Require an Impact Analysis.**
- **Goal 4: Transportation Considerations.** *Promote a multi-modal transportation system which provides or improves access & circulation within and adjacent to commercial areas.*
 - **Policy 4.1: Levels of Service.**
 - **Policy 4.2: Evaluate Traffic Impacts.**
 - **Policy 4.3: Minimize Traffic Diversion.**
 - **Policy 4.4: Ensure Adequate Ingress & Egress.**
 - **Policy 4.5: Limit Access.**
 - **Policy 4.7: Provide Pedestrian Access.**
 - **Policy 4.8: Provide Bicycle Access.**
 - **Policy 4.9: Encourage Convenient Parking within Commercial Areas.**

Additional Goals from Horizon 2020

Additional relevant goal statements from Horizon 2020 that support the recommendations of this plan help guide the future development of the study area so that it is consistent with the intent of the City's long-range vision of its future are highlighted below.

Chapter 5, Residential Land Use (low-density)

- **Goal 3: Neighborhood Conservation.** *The character & appearance of existing low-density residential neighborhoods should be protected & improvements made where necessary to maintain the values of properties & enhance the quality of life.*
- **Goal 5: Create a Functional & Aesthetic Living Environment.** *Create & maintain neighborhoods that are aesthetically pleasing & functionally efficient & practical.*
- **Goal 6: Compatible Transition from Low-Density Residential Development to More Intensive Land Uses.** *Ensure transition from low-density residential neighborhoods is compatible with more intensive residential & nonresidential land uses.*

Chapter 5, Residential Land Use (medium- & higher-density)

- **Goal 1: Criteria for Location of Medium- & Higher-Density Residential Development.** *Adopt criteria which will ensure that livability, property values, open space, safety & the general welfare are sustained.*
- **Goal 2: Create a Functional & Aesthetic Living Environment.** *Create & maintain medium- & higher-density residential developments that are aesthetically pleasing & functionally efficient & practical.*
- **Goal 3: Compatible Transition from Medium- & Higher-Density Residential Development to Both More Intensive & Less Intensive Land Uses.** *Ensure transition from medium- & higher-density residential neighborhoods is compatible with nonresidential land uses or low-density residential land uses.*
- **Goal 4: Transportation Considerations.** *Promote a transportation system which provides or improves access & circulation within & adjacent to medium- & higher-density residential areas.*

Chapter 7, Industrial & Employment Related Land Use

- **Goal 2: Compatible Transition from Industrial/Employment-Related Development to Less Intensive Uses.** *Ensure a compatible transition between industrial & employment-related developments & less intensive land uses.*

- ❑ **Goal 3: Criteria for Location of Industrial or Employment-Related Development.** Provide industrial & employment areas to meet the economic needs of the community.
- ❑ **Goal 4: Transportation Considerations.** Promote a multi-modal transportation system which provides or improves access & circulation within & adjacent to industrial areas.

Chapter 8, Transportation

- ❑ **Goal 1: Transportation Considerations.** Promote a multi-modal transportation system which provides or improves access & circulation throughout the city & county.
- ❑ **Goal 2: Street System Goal.** Provide an efficient & effective network of streets & roads which access all appropriate areas, provide continuity & connections into & beyond the City of Lawrence & Douglas County, & support the arrangements of various land uses within the urbanized area.
- ❑ **Goal 3: Access Management Goal.** Promote the mixture of planning, design, traffic operations, & administrative actions to coordinate roadway access in order to maximize safety & mobility while reducing delays to travel.
- ❑ **Goal 4: Public Transportation System Goal.** Implement a coordinated public transportation system that offers a viable choice of travel which addresses the needs of individuals & the community as a whole. Public transportation should be viewed as an alternative mode of transportation to reduce localized traffic congestion, improve air quality, conserve energy, & provide better transportation for those who choose not to or are unable to drive.
- ❑ **Goal 5: Pedestrian & Bicycle Transportation System Goal.** Establish an integrated system of bicycle & pedestrian improvements which provide for safe & efficient connections throughout the community, & offers viable choices of travel. Walking is a form of transportation. Recognize that walking is an important form of transportation especially for children, the elderly, & those who cannot afford other transportation modes.

Chapter 9, Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

- ❑ **Goal 1: Balance Between Natural & Man-Made Environments.** A balance between the natural & man-made environments is needed to conserve & protect natural features while allowing new development.
- ❑ **Goal 2: Protect & Expand the System of Park, Recreation & Open Space.**
- ❑ **Goal 3: Criteria for the Location of Parks & Open Space.** Create a park, recreation & open space system that is sensitive to both the recreational needs & the environmental/ecological needs of the community.
- ❑ **Goal 4: Compatible Transition from Recreation Facilities to Residential Land Uses.** Ensure compatible transition from recreational facilities whether public or private to residential land uses.

Chapter 10, Community Facilities

- ❑ **Goal 1: Provide Facilities & Services to Meet the Needs of the Community.** Provide quality public & semi-public facilities equitably distributed throughout the community.
- ❑ **Goal 2: Criteria for the Location of Community Facilities.** Adopt criteria which will ensure that community facilities are located, designed & operated in a manner compatible with neighboring uses.
- ❑ **Goal 3: Transportation Considerations.** Promote a multi-modal transportation system which provides or improves access & circulation within & adjacent to community facilities.

Chapter 12, Economic Development

- ❑ **Goal 1: Increase Job Growth.** Increase job growth at a rate equal to or above that of population & housing to maintain a separate community identity.
- ❑ **Goal 2: Increase Tax Base.** Ensure tax base growth equals or exceeds population & housing growth.

The Northwest Plan

The Northwest Plan is the most recent, detailed guide (completed in 1997) for the future land use and development for the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. The Northwest Plan covers approximately four square miles (Sections 20, 21, 28, 29) in northwest Lawrence bounded by West 6th Street to the south, Folks/E 1100 Road to the east, Douglas County Road 438/Farmers Turnpike to the north, and E 900 Road to the west. While the study area only represents a small portion (approximately eighty acres) of the Northwest Plan study area, the Northwest Plan has a direct influence on recommended land uses for the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area.

The Northwest Plan indicates the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area should be urbanized calling for high intensity land uses to be located within the study area and that land uses “step-down,” or decrease, in intensity as activities move north and west away from the intersection. Any new development occurring in this area needs to be compatible with the adopted policies and regulations of the City. The Plan also stresses the importance of maintaining any unique environmental features and conditions, perhaps by incorporating them into development.

As mentioned previously in this area plan, the Northwest Plan envisions commercial, office, and institutional land uses within the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area. The Northwest Plan identifies both the northwest and northeast corners of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection appropriate for commercial uses. It identifies the northwest corner of the West 6th Street/Folks Road intersection appropriate for institutional uses. It identifies that the area between the commercial and institutional uses appropriate for office activities. The Northwest Plan also states that industrial uses are not appropriate for the Northwest Plan study area, but office and office-research activities are. Residential development is also recommended in the Northwest Plan as an appropriate transitional use between the high-intensive uses recommended along West 6th street and the less-intensive uses as development “steps-down” to the north of West 6th Street. The Plan sets a maximum residential density of 15 dwelling units per acre (15du/ac) within the entire Northwest Plan study area.

West 6th Street Access Management Plan

Access from West 6th Street will be limited in accordance to the provisions of City Ordinance #7465 (adopted in 2002), based on the West 6th Street Access Management Plan completed in 1998. While improvements to West 6th Street west of Folks Road are a priority, access into activities of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area will also be generated by developed and developing neighborhoods surrounding the study area. The development of a multi-modal circulation pattern is highly encouraged. Pedestrian accessibility is a priority of the City and the provision of bike paths and sidewalks connecting internal and external neighborhoods are emphasized. It is also recommended that the development of multiple-use recreational trails be included as part of the development of this study area. Consideration of public transit is also important in the study area. Planning for public transit includes, but is not limited to, bus turnaround areas, bus loading areas, and bus routing.

Recommendation

The West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area is anticipated to evolve into one of the more prominent commercial centers of the community. The Lawrence City Commission has directed City staff to ensure new development at this intersection area is appropriate for the surrounding neighborhoods and also within the context of the entire community. The City Commission has also directed City staff to ensure that new development is compatible with existing development located within and adjacent to the intersection area. Any development proposals for this intersection will come under close scrutiny to ensure this direction is abided by. The following land use recommendations regarding the development of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive study area are based on the analysis of the above identified existing conditions and envisioned future of this intersection area. In addition to the recommendations below, it is recommended that no building permits be issued for the study area until the West 6th Street Improvement Project is substantially completed.

The Area West of Wakarusa Drive

The area located west of Wakarusa Drive (the northwest corner of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection) is recommended as most appropriate for commercial development of a retail focus. Given the amount of existing commercial retail development located south of West 6th Street, it is recommended the existing zoning designation of PCD-2 be retained with additional restrictions placed upon it. The restriction being that retail development located at this corner is limited to 154,000gsf. This is the amount of retail gross square footage that was approved by the Planning and City Commissions. An additional restriction is that a single building footprint shall not exceed 80,000gsf. Such a footprint is typical of a grocery store "anchor" having additional service-oriented commercial development. It is also recommended the remaining zoning designations remain intact without additional restrictions.

The Area East of Wakarusa Drive

The area located east of Wakarusa Drive (the northeast corner of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection) is recommended as most appropriate for commercial development of a non-retail focus. As three (3) corners of this intersection are likely to develop as retail centers, it is recommended the remaining corner incorporate less-intensive commercial development. This corner is in closest proximity to the high school complex and indoor aquatic center to the north and adjacent residential neighborhoods to the northeast. It is recommended the existing A, Agricultural, zoning designation be rezoned to PCD-2 with restrictions. The restriction being that the development of this corner of the intersection incorporate some kind of recreational commercial use, mixed-use office-residential activity, public or semi-public/institutional use, or other such use or activity that can be demonstrated as having a less intensive impact on traffic patterns and surrounding land use activities and neighborhoods. It is also recommended that up to 62,000gsf would be permissible for retail commercial use if planned as part of an overall development plan incorporating a mix of uses that are designed to be pedestrian-friendly.

The Area West of Folks Road

The area located west of Folks Road (the northwest corner of the West 6th Street/Folks Road intersection) is recommended as most appropriate for medium- to high- density residential development. This area could also serve well as a mixed office-residential development or public/semi-public/institutional use. It is recommended no commercial, retail or otherwise, be located at this intersection as such activity would disrupt the residential character and feel of adjacent land use activities and residential neighborhoods. Commercial activity at this intersection would also expand the commercial center at West 6th Street and Wakarusa Drive from a center into a strip development, which is in conflict with the goals and policies of Horizon 2020 and the Northwest Plan. It is recommended the existing A, Agricultural, zoning designation be rezoned to PRD-2 with the intent of encouraging a mixed-use office-residential development that would be complimentary to existing and future developments and neighborhoods.

Additional Recommendations

It is also recommended that the total allowable retail commercial square footage be limited to 440,000gsf for the four corners of the West 6th Street/Wakarusa Drive intersection. In the event the approved development plan for 154,000gsf on the northwest corner of West 6th Street and Wakarusa Drive expires or otherwise becomes null and void, the total square footage allowed at the intersection will be reduced to 420,000gsf. A breakdown of square footage allocation is illustrated in the table below.

Total Square Footage Allowed	440,000gsf*	420,000gsf+
Southside of West 6 th Street (existing development)	224,000gsf	224,000gsf
Northwest Corner of West 6 th Street/Wakarusa Drive	154,000gsf	136,000gsf
Northeast Corner of West 6 th Street/Wakarusa Drive	62,000gsf	60,000gsf
<i>Note: * = with approved development plan on northwest corner; + = without approved plan</i>		