

## **Northeast Sector Plan**

### SWOT Exercise

The following issues were identified in a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) exercise at the kick-off meeting held on September 17, 2009 for the Northeast Sector Plan.

### Strengths (Assets)

- Irrigation/groundwater for farming and rural water
- Airport
- Access to highway, airport, railroad – convergence of transportation
- High concentration of Class 1 and 2 soils
- KU Endowment land
- Soil absorbs water – for drainage concerns
- Close to urban markets for fresh produce
- Topography of land is attractive to certain industries
- Primary school in the area
- Historic floodplain
- Topography attractive for agriculture
- Closeness of water table – capability to dry farm
- Shallow water table
- Kansas River for education/recreation
- Corps levee protection/reservoirs
- Supports wildlife
- Minimal sanitary sewer infrastructure
- Educated population
- Property values
- Low population density
- Low density of industrial use relative to agriculture use and pollution
- Scenic gateway to town
- Higher rainfall – favorable micro climate for agriculture
- Buffer zone to prevent flooding in Lawrence
- Strategic location to multiple metro areas
- Accessible for multiple transportation options like walking and biking
- Easy access to State Capitol and international airport
- Significant portion not in the city – unincorporated
- No chiggers – chigger free
- Active and involved community

### Weaknesses (Liabilities)

- Train delays
- Lack of convenience retail – grocery
- Lack of fire/medical
- Interstate access through toll booth
- Drainage – floodplain
- Road maintenance – city/county
- Mosquitoes
- Unclear business vacancy rates
- Atrazine and nitrates in groundwater
- Airport height restrictions – no upward lights
- Midland Junction dangerous highway curves
- Flat land and transportation is attractive for development
- Westar power plant plume
- Excessive traffic speeds near airport entrance
- Emergency services access – response time
- Airport flight paths – noise, accidents, jet fuel danger
- Height restriction near airport for industrial development
- Illumination issues from airport
- 150 acres of airport runways covering prime soil
- Excessive truck traffic
- Vulnerability of pollution for groundwater contamination for those that depend on it
- North Lawrence “bath tub” topography – impact of impervious surfaces
- Constrained access between area north of the river and the city
- Threats of development – status quo v. development
- Ability to make long-term plans – use property as it is zoned

## Opportunities

- Establish a sustainable local food program
- Diversified tax base
- Build the Ag Economy – more jobs
- Commuter rail between KC, Lawrence and Topeka
- Ag land value for retirement plan – transfer equity
- Jobs – airport, farm-based (CSA's, U-Pick, greenhouses)
- Appropriate economic development for the area – wind generators, alternative energy – low population density helps
- Agri-Tourism, Agri-Education
- KU Partnerships - outdoor lab education opportunities – aviation
- Partnerships with other entities
- Alternative sewer – on-site modular wetlands
- Community gardens – local food – healthy living – quality of life for city dwellers
- Manage flood plain areas to reduce flood risk – no adverse impact
- Food security
- Transportation link for ag economy – rail, highway
- Collaboration among many groups – public/private
- Residential development for growth (not taxes)
- Green corridor from downtown to Weaver bottoms – multi-modal
- Employment centers close to city – multi-modal
- Farmer to farmer programs to transfer farm land and maintain retirement value for farmer
- Within the process of drafting future land use for the Northeast Sector Plan, removal of the Midland Junction and southwest of the Lawrence Municipal Airport "snowflakes" on the Chapter 7 Map titled "Future Industrial" and consolidating them as one "snowflake" that sits on the Lawrence Municipal Airport proper.

## Threats

- Poor groundwater quality
- Developers
- Industrial development
- Impervious surfaces
- Urbanization
- Increased climate driven flooding
- Stormwater draining south to Lawrence
- Ever changing government regulations
- Annexation by Lawrence
- Unknown expectations
- Logging on river
- Industrial disaster or UP railroad disaster
- Sand strip mining
- Rising fuel prices
- Increased tax base due to urbanization
- Limited growing season
- Changing climate
- Widening turnpike – noise and light pollution
- Large lot residential tracts
- Increase potential for flood issues
- Failure to recognize agriculture land as a finite resource
- Increasing traffic
- Aging farmers and absentee farming
- Catastrophic flooding – risk of levee breach – development in the flood plain
- Threats to wildlife due to urbanization
- Decreased FAA funding because of development around airport
- 5-acre residential sprawl
- Lift sewer pump stations subject to failure
- Restrictive regulations that limit ability to use own property
- Limiting future use of land to farming
- Reservoirs silting in – harder to manage stormwater/flooding
- The two "snowflakes" on the Chapter 7 Map titled "Future Industrial" that identify Midland Junction and the area southwest of the Lawrence Municipal Airport.

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