



Section I: Introduction

The K-96 Corridor Economic Development Plan represents a collaborative effort that spans the border of two counties and intersects four communities. The Counties of Reno and Sedgwick and the communities of Maize, Mt. Hope, Haven, and South Hutchinson have come together to plan for the future of the K-96 Corridor. The Corridor currently serves as the primary transportation route between Wichita, on the southeast, and Hutchinson on the north. K-96 represents one of the most heavily traveled State Highways within Kansas, allowing people to easily commute between two prominent Kansas cities. The counties and municipalities have created and supported this collaborative effort for the benefit of the region.

PLANNING PROCESS:

During the past six months, the participants involved in K-96 Corridor Economic Development planning process have followed a rational sequence of steps to develop this update to the existing comprehensive plan. The comprehensive planning process is made up of six steps and is continuous in nature. These steps include:

- Issues identification
- Goal Setting
- Data gathering and analysis
- Formulation of alternatives
- Implementation
- Feedback / evaluation

Such a process relies not only on the expertise of planners, but also on the input of experts from other fields, members of elected and appointed boards and commissions, and community residents at-large.

In addition to technical analysis of data by the planning team, study coalitions and public meetings were held to elicit issues and goals from municipal and county staff, elected officials, and residents regarding the future development of the K-96 corridor.

In addition to the data gathering, data analysis, and public input efforts; alternative growth and development scenarios were evaluated to set a framework to move from existing conditions to desired goals for the future. Whereas technical data and information gathering results provided the foundation for the "Corridor Conditions" and "Forethought" chapters of the plan updates, the "Development and Design" and "Getting It Done" chapters provide guidance for the corridor's future decisions and actions.

The Plan as a living document

The primary implementation tools for the plan are put

in place through land use ordinances, budgetary activities, and other legal and policy documents. As the corridor changes and priorities shift, the plan and associated planning efforts will need to be adjusted. Thus, the planning process and the Corridor Plan are “living” or dynamic in nature. The intent is to ensure annual review and minor updates through continual maintenance of information, monitoring of corridor issues, and follow-up on decisions made by the governing jurisdictions. Major evaluations of the plan should be scheduled on five-year intervals. Such an approach makes the plan a viable instrument which is flexible and adaptable to unanticipated change.

Plan Implementation as an ongoing activity

Implementation of the Corridor Plan, which begins with the adoption of the plan document, should be an ongoing day-to-day process. By itself, the plan does not bring about change except by identifying issues, articulating goals and objectives, defining directions, and providing information regarding the future consequences of present actions.

Implementation of the plan is directly connected to daily public and private decisions regarding the allocation of public and private resources and the need to coordinate the actions resulting from those decisions.



K-96 Corridor Cottage Industry

The final component to the corridor planning process is the acquisition and use of feedback from the community to evaluate the performance of the plan and refine its recommendations. Refinement activities, including the preparation of a overlay zoning district, provide a solid sense of direction for policy / decision

makers in the public and private sectors. The utilization of feedback creates a plan that is responsive to the needs of the community and is not stagnant.

PLAN ORGANIZATION:

The K-96 Corridor Plan consists of seven chapters: I) Introduction, II) Forethought, III) Corridor Conditions, IV) Corridor Foundations, V) Corridor Structure, VI) Corridor Development and Design, and VII) Getting It Done. Each of these major chapters is discussed in more detail below:

- *Section I. Introduction:* The first chapter of the corridor plan includes a summary of the plan's major findings and recommendations. It also includes a section that provides a brief overview of the process.
- *Section II. Forethought:* The second chapter of the corridor plan identifies the strategic issues facing the K-96 corridor; it also presents a vision and long-range planning goals. These issues, assets, goals and visions are community-based; this means that they were derived from the public meetings held during the process. This chapter presents the wants, needs, concerns, and desires of the community at the time the plan was developed.
- *Section III. Corridor Conditions:* The plan's third chapter analyzes the various existing conditions (both regional and local) that affect the corridor's future development. This chapter addresses topics such as population, economics, the natural environment, land use and development, land use regulations, transportation, and public services and utilities. The planning implications of these existing conditions are also addressed in this chapter.
- *Section IV. Corridor Foundation:* The Corridor Foundation section begins to look at those items that will create the foundation of the corridor plan. The issues and goals that will shape the corridor plan are reviewed and alternatives are created.

Based on a review of alternative development scenarios a direction was chosen.

- *Section V. Corridor Structure:* The fifth chapter of the plan represents the concepts and recommendations that are the core of the corridor plan. As the concepts and recommendations are implemented, a corridor definition and development pattern will be established. This chapter contains specific corridor concepts and recommendations that will be further defined in the final section of the plan.
- *Section VI. Development and Design:* This section provides additional detail regarding the development of the K-96 corridor. It includes specific detail for a number of sites that are targeted for development. This chapter also includes cost estimates for improvements associated with potential development sites. The chapter concludes with design guidelines that will direct the visual and aesthetic nature of development within the corridor.
- *Section VII. Getting It Done:* This chapter details the short and long-range strategies required implementing the recommendations of the plan. The details of what, who, and when will be addressed for each implementation strategy.

PARTICIPATION

The accompanying diagram illustrates the planning process utilized for the development of the K-96 Corridor Economic Development Plan. A community based process led participants through a series of planning activities that started with broad planning perspectives. The process continued with the development of planning goals and moved through a discussion of alternative futures. The process is completed by the selection of a preferred direction followed by development and adoption of the plan.

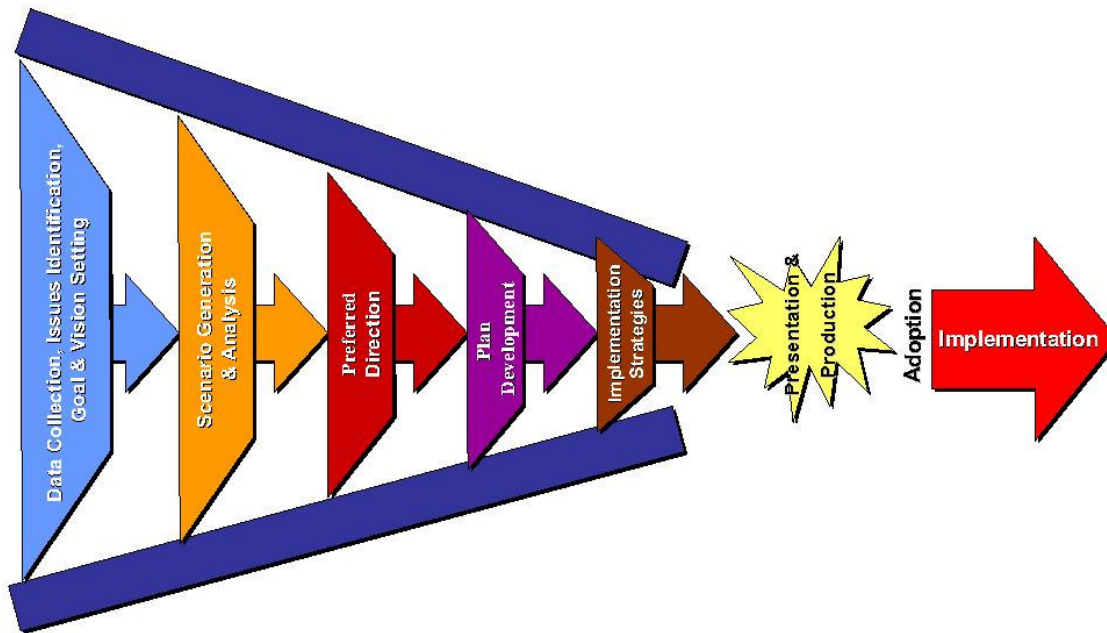


FIGURE I-1: K-96 Corridor Planning Process

The plan was developed through a community participation process and lead by the study coalition comprised of representative from the two counties and four municipalities. The study coalition gave ongoing advice concerning the planning process, development issues, and plan direction. The planning process commenced with a kick-off meeting with the study coalition of community leaders to gain a perspective on the issues that face the corridor. Subsequently, town hall style meetings were held in order to receive input from the broader community, to test vision and goals statements, and to analyze proposed future development alternatives.

After a preferred direction was agreed upon by the study coalition members, the consultants prepared the plan in draft form. After distribution and review of the draft, a final document was produced based on comments and changes made.