

# VISIONEERING WICHITA



Sedgwick County  
Arena



Healthy Lifestyles



Solid Waste



Emergency Response



Urban & Regional  
Development



Elderly & Aging



Technical Training

June 15, 2005

## Infrastructure Foundation – Public Safety

- d. Provide high quality emergency response systems and homeland security

**Sedgwick County's Action Step** – The Sedgwick County Division of Public Safety will lead the effort to coordinate and improve Emergency Response Systems and Homeland Security by working with the private sector, other units of local government, the State of Kansas and the Federal Government, including MMRS.

### Current Situation:

- **Integrated Emergency Management Course** – In April, 2005, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) conducted a four and a half day exercise-based training activity that provided a realistic simulation of necessary response measures in a mass casualty terrorism-related disaster. This Integrated Emergency Management Course (IEMC) was held at FEMA's Noble Training Center in Anniston, Alabama. The course was designed to not only provide a lifelike model of such a situation, but also to address the areas of policymaking, decision-making, communications, coordination of resources, management of personnel, and implementation of procedures.
- **Selection for participation in the IEMC** was determined solely by FEMA and involved a rigorous and competitive application process for which more than 100-nationwide MMRS jurisdictions were eligible. Seventy-eight officials from Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita, Wesley HCA, and Via-Christi Hospitals traveled to Anniston to participate in the event. These officials included: two Sedgwick County Commissioners, a member of the City of Wichita City Council, the Mayor of Bel Aire and senior representative managers from Sheriff, Police, Fire, EMS, 911, Public Works, Water, Public Health and Public Information departments.
- **The taxing process** was designed to saturate participants to an almost breaking point, allowing for a life-like experience for all involved, testing existing plans, response capabilities, decision-making skills and working relationships.

### Areas of Vision Alliance

- Image & Marketing
- Tourism & Visitors
- Health Care
- Recreation
- Arts
- Public Safety
- Sense of Community
- Human Services
- Good Government
- Downtown Development
- Transportation
- Water Resources
- Flood Control
- Housing
- Environment & Natural Resources
- Facility Accessibility
- Visioneering Wichita Communication



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- **Results** – Though challenging, the end result of the experience made clear that Sedgwick County has well-prepared plans, capabilities, relationships, and, most importantly, highly competent, decisive leadership. Participants impressed both the evaluators and federal planners and were among the best that officials had ever seen. As with any learning environment, the exercise revealed some areas of emergency response that need additional examination, but as a whole, the process validated the fact that Sedgwick County is doing very well in preparing for a bio-terror event. In the end, the experience was a valuable learning tool and a perfect opportunity to cement old relationships and build new ones.

**Next Steps:**

- ***In an effort to enhance readiness and preparation*** in regards to federal, state and local homeland security, Sedgwick County Emergency Management is currently taking the lead on an interdisciplinary committee comprised of members from Sedgwick County, the City of Wichita and small city public safety agencies. The goal of this committee is to develop a strategy on how to spend \$650,000 in federal homeland security funds in a manner that is conducive to enhancing security and response methods.
- **Heartland Preparedness Center** – Envisioned to be a training complex designed to house front-line responding units in times of civil emergencies, the Heartland Preparedness Center will include an Armed Forces Reserve Center for National Guard and Marine Reserve units, a Joint Training Center with classrooms to be used by both the City of Wichita Police and Fire Departments as well as Sedgwick County Sheriff and Fire Departments, a Tactical Training Area and an Organizational Maintenance Shop. The facility will allow for greater training preparation and administrative office space.

**Other Public Safety initiatives:**

- **The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council** continues to seek ways to provide more effective and efficient criminal justice programs. The Council remains committed to examining various processes and facility options that will provide high quality public safety within reasonable cost constraints.
- **Construction of the new Public Safety Center** is scheduled to begin in July 2005. This state-of-the-art facility will house the 911, Emergency Management and Public Safety Director offices and will act as the chief command center during emergency situations. The facility is designed to meet strict FEMA standards for wind and impact, creating a protected environment needed for continuous operation. Due to the design of the building, there will be expanded space to grow the 911 operations in the future as needed.
- **Computer Aided Dispatch System** – With aid provided by a federal earmark from Senator Pat Robert's office, a new CAD system will be installed in the new Public Safety Center. This new system will replace the current system and will provide better and more efficient data and dispatching capabilities, a great asset for dispatchers. Additionally, new Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology will be installed in all Wichita and Sedgwick County Public Safety Vehicles beginning Fall 2005 to enhance the safety of responders as well provide resources for better management and response.