# MOVING
## McALESTER
# FORWARD PLAN 2040

# MOVING MCALESTER FORWARD

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040

**Prepared for:**
**John Browne**
Mayor

**Adopted:**
**September 25, 2019**

**MOVING**
**McALESTER**
**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

Comprehensive Plan

# MOVING MCALESTER FORWARD
## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040

# THANK YOU
## FOR HELPING US!

Thank you to the City staff who worked hard with the community and consultants to create this comprehensive plan. We have a unique history and our future will undoubtedly be just as interesting. We've had great input and feedback from an inclusive group of industries, businesses, organizations, and citizens. Any plan is only as good as those who contribute to it and I am confident this proposal provides the best way forward for all citizens. This is a snapshot of where we are today and a roadmap for current and future City leaders as they make decisions. Every component of this plan is important to McAlesterites – from housing and jobs to quality of life and health. The City will make progress through the hard work of City staff, dedication of citizens, and progressive ideas of leadership. Here's looking forward to the next twenty years!

**John Browne**
Mayor

This comprehensive plan is a collaboration towards a prosperous, healthy, and resilient city. It was terrific to see hundreds of citizens helping set priorities through surveys and public meetings. This plan is beneficial to all residents thanks to the diversity of participants. McAlester should be adaptive and livable for the young and the aging. I also appreciate the time of the stakeholder partnerships that ensured the plan includes their priorities and projects. There's no doubt our decisions today affect the quality of life for our citizens in the future. Thank you to those who gave your time and perspectives to Moving McAlester Forward.

**Jayme Clifton**
City Planner

The City of McAlester is embracing change and preparing for growth through this comprehensive plan. While we are retaining our focus on infrastructure, economic development, and quality of life, it's exciting to see new priorities in health and wellbeing and our historic downtown. This long-range tool was developed through studying and evaluating our city and I know that our residents have impressive visions and solid ideas. This plan helps us be proactive and lay a foundation for the development of plans, budgets, and recruitment efforts. We are grateful to the City Council and the Planning Commission for their leadership during this process. We all want the best for McAlester. While we may not know what the future holds, solid planning and strategic investments help us influence what may come. We look forward to moving into implementation and continuing to engage the public in each step.

**Pete Stasiak**
City Manager

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Moving McAlester Forward was created over a period of 14 months and involved many community-wide individuals and organizations, including those listed below. The City is especially grateful to the Steering Committee members who committed their time, energy and resources to this effort. Their insights helped shape Moving McAlester Forward into a plan that is tailored to address the many opportunities for positive change over the next 20 years.

**GUERNSEY**
**NEALON PLANNING**
**BUTZER ARCHITECTS AND URBANISM**

## CITY OF MCALESTER

**ARVEST BANK**
**AT&T**
**BUFFALO GALS ANTIQUES**
**BUILT RITE**
**CANDLEWOOD SUITES**
**CENTERPOINT ENERGY**
**CHOCTAW NATION SMALL BUSINESS**
**COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA**
**E911**
**EASTERN OKLAHOMA STATE COLLEGE**
**FIRST NATIONAL BANK**
**GOOD SAMARITAN OUTREACH**
**HARBOR MOUNTAIN COFFEE HOUSE**
**HARPER & GREY HOUSE**
**HEALTHY LIVING**
**HOPE HOUSE**
**INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS**
**KIAMICHI TECHNOLOGY CENTER**
**KREBS BREWING COMPANY**
**LEADER GROUP REALTY**
**MCALESTER ART & HUMANITIES COUNCIL**
**MCALESTER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**
**MCALESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY**
**MCALESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS**
**MCALESTER REGIONAL HEALTH CENTER**
**MCALESTER SERTOMA CLUB**

**MAIN STREET ASSOCIATION**
**OLD TOWN ASSOCIATION**
**OKLAHOMA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE**
**OKLAHOMANS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING**
**PITTSBURG COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE**
**PITTSBURG COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**
**PITTSBURG COUNTY FARMERS MARKET**
**PITTSBURG COUNTY GENEALOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
**PITTSBURG COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT**
**PRIDE IN MCALESTER**
**PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY OF OKLAHOMA**
**PUTERBAUGH FOUNDATION TRUSTEES**
**REMAX REALTY**
**ST. FRANCIS WARREN CLINIC**
**SHARED BLESSINGS**
**SPACESHIP EARTH COFFEE**
**THE FARM**
**THE MEETING PLACE**
**OKLAHOMA TOBACCO SETTLEMENT ENDOWMENT TRUST**
**WALMART**
**WAV 11**

# CONTENT

# WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

**A comprehensive plan:**

- provides a common framework for addressing issues pertaining to growth and development
- seeks to strike a balance among the many competing demands on land resources by creating development patterns that are orderly and rational, provides the greatest benefits for individuals and the community as a whole and avoids nuisance conflicts between land uses
- will help the community protect public investments since well-planned, orderly and phased development patterns are less expensive for a community to provide with public services than low-density, scattered development
- will allow this community to plan development in a way that protects valued resources such as identified environmental features
- provides guidance for shaping the appearance of the community and fosters a sense of place
- promotes economic development
- provides an objective basis to support zoning and other decisions, particularly if legally challenged

*--Adapted from definition authored by Gary D. Taylor, Iowa State University*

# 1 | INTRODUCTION

Moving McAlester Forward is an update to the 1996-2006 Comprehensive Plan for McAlester, Oklahoma. The Plan provides guidance to local government staff, elected and appointed officials, businesses, civic organizations, and its citizens on how to embrace opportunities, address challenges, and position the City for future success.

**The City of McAlester, faced with the challenge of keeping pace in an unpredictable race to stay ahead of the curve in the modern development landscape, decided to embark upon a planning process with the goal of positioning McAlester to take advantage of its geographical strengths while also staying true to—and paying homage to—its historical roots. The result of these efforts is Moving McAlester Forward, which is a comprehensive plan with a vision for the future of McAlester, as well as, establishing and supporting long-range goals and objectives. While it is intended to guide decisions related to public and private sector activities within McAlester, its primary role is a tool for local government. The plan provides policy guidance and provides input to City leaders' decisions regarding public and private land development proposals, amendments to the local regulations to facilitate desired development, the expenditure of public funds, cooperative efforts, and issues of pressing concern, such as economic development, job growth, natural resource conservation, and the rehabilitation of older neighborhoods. This plan is written to provide direction for future activities for the 20-year period following plan adoption.**

# ABOUT THE PLAN

## MOVING MCALESTER FORWARD

Moving McAlester Forward is an update to the Comprehensive Plan for McAlester, Oklahoma, 1996 – 2006. The updated Plan provides guidance to local government staff, elected and appointed officials, businesses, civic organizations, and its citizens on how to embrace opportunities, address challenges, and position the City for future success.

A key aspect of the plan is the articulation of the future development pattern as envisioned by the community. This vision is represented by the Future Land Use and Conservation Map.  It is based on the assessment of the land and infrastructure to determine the suitability of various locations for future development as well as community preferences and priorities. Community input obtained during the process is explained in more detail in "The Planning Process" section that follows as well as the Appendix. The results of the assessment are summarized in **"The Big Picture"** section of the document, and they provide the basis for the Vision and Goals presented in  **"The Vision"** section, along with the Future Land Use and Conservation Map. The final section, **"Realizing the Vision,"** contains the policy recommendations and strategies, organized by the seven plan elements.  The action plan within this final section distills, from the longer list of recommendations, a few key steps to be taken in the near term to steer the City in the direction of the vision.

Encompassing nearly 700,000 acres (16 square miles), the planning area is the incorporated area of McAlester.  The Planning Area Map, Figure 1, depicts the current city limits. Additional information about the City is provided in "The Big Picture" section.

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*FIGURE 1: PLANNING AREA MAP*

# THE PLANNING PROCESS

Moving McAlester Forward is the product of an eighteen-month process that involved three primary steps: existing conditions assessment, plan development, and policy formulation (see Figure 2). The steps of the process began with a detailed examination of existing conditions and culminated in the preparation of this document and a companion summary.

The process was organized around an inclusive, multifaceted community engagement program executed through collaboration with various project partners whose buy-in is critical to the successful implementation of the plan. Project participants considered issues and potential opportunities, fiscal and market realities, and community values to clearly define an inspirational yet realistic vision for the future and outline a sound set of action steps to realize that vision. To complement the community meetings, other community input opportunities were offered, including online surveys and stakeholder interviews.

### STEERING COMMITTEE

A series of Steering Committee meetings were conducted during this process. The committee was comprised of 14 members representing a diverse range of interests. This committee helped guide the process by deciphering community input gathered throughout the process, sharing background information to provide context, offering ideas for policy changes, and evaluating products of the process prior to completion.

### AREA TOUR

At project kickoff, city leaders, city staff, and the planning consultants met to discuss and tour the Planning Area. This initial observation of the existing development pattern strengthened the project team's grasp of the existing conditions and stimulated the generation of ideas to explore during the planning process. This tour included city staff and others with knowledge of the development pattern. This sharing of insights revealed important local conditions and issues that might not be immediately apparent from a review of maps and data.

### WEBSITE + SOCIAL MEDIA + BRANDING

A project website was created to disseminate information to the public. The project schedule, presentations, maps, and links to the surveys were among the items made available. City staff employed social media to drive traffic to the project website. Branding was also an important piece to help engage the community. Logos, color schemes, and fonts were all chosen to promote the program of Moving McAlester Forward.

### COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Three community meetings were held during the planning process. The existing conditions as well as related issues and opportunities were discussed at the first community meeting in February 2018.  At the second meeting in June 2018, refinements to community goals and ideas for direction for the future of the community were presented. With input gathered at the second meeting, policy ideas were formulated. The third meeting was held in November 2018 to confirm the preferred direction and solicit feedback on policies and strategies for implementing the plan.  In addition, city staff and consultant team representatives attended community events to expand outreach efforts.

**Left:** A citizen at a community meeting is giving ideas about future land use.
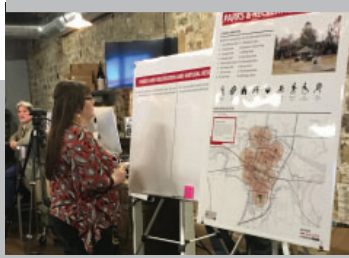
**Center:** Community meeting attendees discuss existing conditions.

**Right:** Stakeholder interviews were underway early in the planning process.

## STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Stakeholder interviews, another type of meeting held during the initial phase of the project, augmented the information gleaned from the analysis of existing conditions. People with direct knowledge of crucial data shared insights and clarified the relevance of specific circumstances to the planning process. A total of 62 people participated in the interviews, which addressed the following topics: economic development; business; real estate; infrastructure (primarily water and wastewater) and transportation; parks and recreation; open space and natural resources; college life; senior living; and neighborhood interests (refer to the Appendix for a list of interviewees).

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

Developed with input from city staff, two community surveys designed to solicit input from residents and other stakeholders were conducted. The surveys were used as a tool to engage the community early in the process and supplement the input gathered at community meetings and stakeholder interviews. Over 1,500 people responded to the qualitative surveys, which included both closed- and open-ended questions about land use, development quality, employment, infrastructure, and community amenities. The responses helped clarify residents' perceptions, preferences, and expectations for the future.
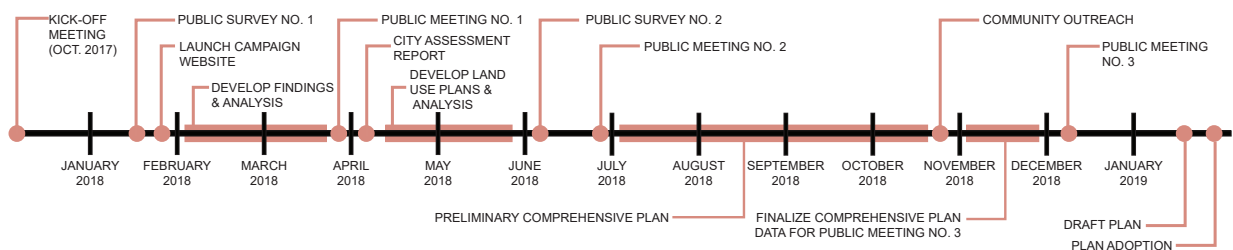


*FIGURE 2: PLANNING PROCESS DIAGRAM*

# 2 | THE BIG PICTURE

## MCALESTER'S STORY

McAlester began as a settlement at the intersection of two trade routes: California Road and Texas Road. The City was named for James Jackson ("J.J.") McAlester who played a key role in establishing the coal mining industry of eastern Oklahoma (refer to "A Brief History" for more information about the City's history).

Today, McAlester is the capital city of Pittsburg County and is also the largest city within the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. McAlester is home to almost 20,000 residents, many of whom are employed by the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant (MCAPP), which manufactures and stores one-third of all the bombs used by the United States military. It lies approximately 14 miles southwest of the City and encompasses a geographic MCAAP area (32 square miles), that is more than twice the size of McAlester. The Oklahoma State Penitentiary on the northeast side of the City has been located in McAlester since 1908.

This section provides a "snapshot" of McAlester today.  It is a glimpse into the current realities present in McAlester. By documenting existing conditions and taking into account important trends, adopted policies, and recent development approvals, a solid foundation for establishing a direction forward can be formed. Another primary objective of this comprehensive analysis of the existing conditions is to discover any crucial factors that may affect future economic, environmental, and social conditions. Taking such impacts into account, we can identify the assets to protect over time, issues to overcome, and opportunities to seize in order to realize a better future. Our current understanding of McAlester is the result of a combination of data inputs from numerous sources: GIS mapping, and on-site observations; completed studies and adopted plans; and input gathered from numerous community members through in-person meetings and surveys.

The information on the following pages highlights the key findings of the existing conditions assessment. A more detailed report of the existing conditions is provided in the Appendix.

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# MCALESTER: A BRIEF HISTORY

McAlester's humble beginnings stemmed from its location at a natural point of settlement: the intersection of the trade routes of California Road and Texas Road.  Known originally as Perryville (named for James Perry who emigrated from Mississippi), the City became the capitol of the Choctaw Nation. The Choctaw Nation allied with the Confederate States of America in the Civil War and Perryville was home to a Confederate supply depot. The Union Army marched on the settlement and burned it to the ground.

James Jackson (J.J.) McAlester, previously a Captain in the Confederate Army, established a trading post for the trading company of Reynolds and Hannaford with a general store slightly north of Perryville.  With the intention of accessing coal deposits in the area and awareness of plans to extend the railroad through Indian Territory, J.J. McAlester influenced the location of the Katy Railroad line, and a stop adjacent to his store. Through this maneuvering, the north-south route was established and the McAlester Rail Depot was created. From that point forward, residents and businesses of Perryville relocated north to the rail depot, marking the true beginnings of McAlester.
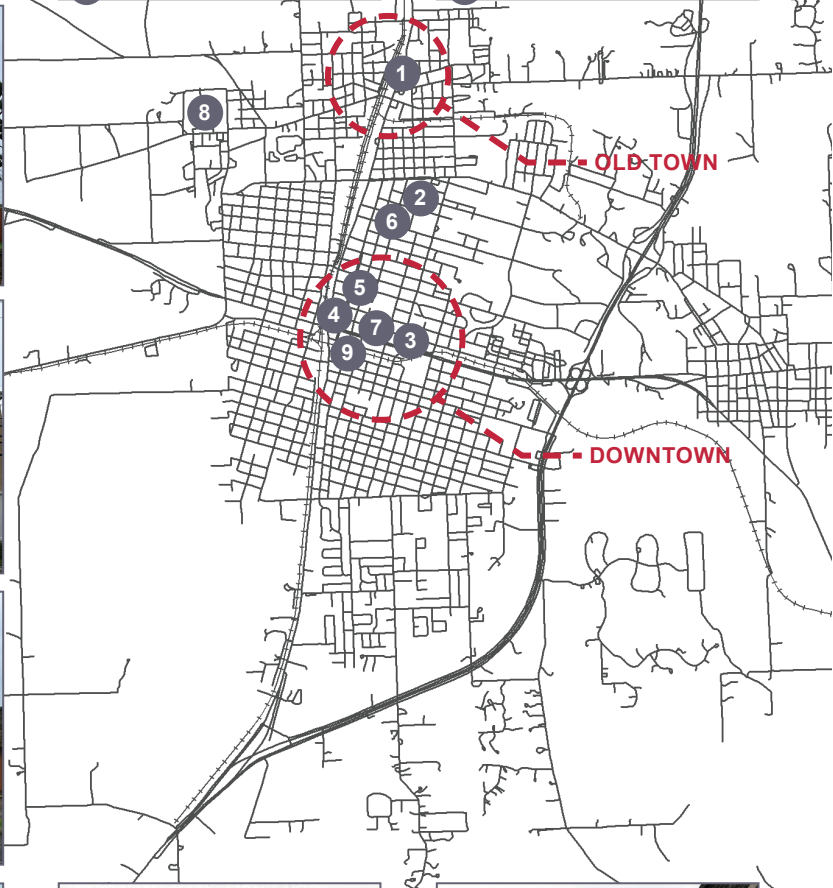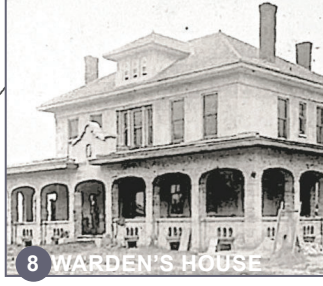
Edwin D. Chadick was another prominent influencer in the evolution of McAlester. Chadick wanted to connect an east-west rail line with the north-south railway that ran through the community of McAlester. McAlester and Chadick were unable to come to terms on right-of-way, so Chadick decided to buy land to the south and create a new community and railroad crossing called South McAlester.

The original McAlester and South McAlester did not become one community until the creation of the municipality in 1907. The original McAlester became known as North McAlester. Today,  "North Town" or "Old Town," as it has become commonly known, is a focused destination.

Source: City of McAlester website (http://www.cityofmcalester.com/index.aspx?nid=130)

**Quick Facts**

- McAlester is the largest city in the Choctaw Nation.
- McAlester was established as a municipality before Oklahoma received statehood.
- The Oklahoma State Penitentiary (OSP), nicknamed "Big Mac," is located in McAlester. OSP was built in 1908 and is the oldest prison facility in the state.
- McAlester was the site of the Terry Nichols Trial after the Oklahoma City bombings in 1995.

1 MCALESTER HOUSE


2 JEFF LEE PARK BATH HOUSE AND POOL


3 CARL ALBERT FEDERAL BUILDING


4 FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH


5 MASONIC TEMPLE


6 GEORGE NIGH NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY


7 BUSBY THEATER (SITE ONLY)


8 WARDEN'S HOUSE


9 HOTEL ALDRIDGE



OLD TOWN

DOWNTOWN
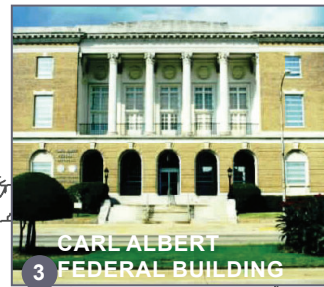
*locations are estimated

## MCALESTER BY THE NUMBERS

**18,198**
McAlester's population in 2017

**$43,382**
Median household income, which is $6,669 less than the median for the state of OK

**36.2**
Average age of McAlester residents

**-1%**
the population has decreased since 2010

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## 16
**Number of square miles in the City's jurisdiction**

## 50
**Pittsburg County's health outcomes ranking among all 77 OK counties**

## 60%
**(Approximate) of population located within ½-mile of a park**

## 3,141
**Number commuting out of McAlester for work everyday**

A few facts and figures quickly paint a picture of McAlester's current circumstances and provide a glimpse into the opportunities and challenges presented on the pages that follow. A more detailed report of existing conditions is provided in the Appendix Assessment Report.

# ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

As an initial step in the planning process, the project team examined the existing conditions pertaining to the various plan elements. This section describes those conditions, providing a baseline against which future conditions can be compared. From this assessment, several issues surfaced that must be overcome as the community continues to evolve and move in a positive direction. Opportunities related to both internal and external conditions were also identified. For example, the anticipated job growth at the MAAP could improve economic conditions in McAlester through new investment in employment centers to accommodate support businesses and reinvestment in neighborhoods as housing demand rises. The results of the assessment were used to inform the development of this comprehensive plan by helping citizens understand potential changes over the next 10 to 20 years.

For a more thorough explanation of the City's current conditions, refer to Appendix Assessment Report.

**1** DEMOGRAPHICS

**2** MARKET CONDITION | ECONOMY

**3** LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

**4** HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS

**5** PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE + NATURAL RESOURCES

**6** TRANSPORTATION

**7** INFRASTRUCTURE

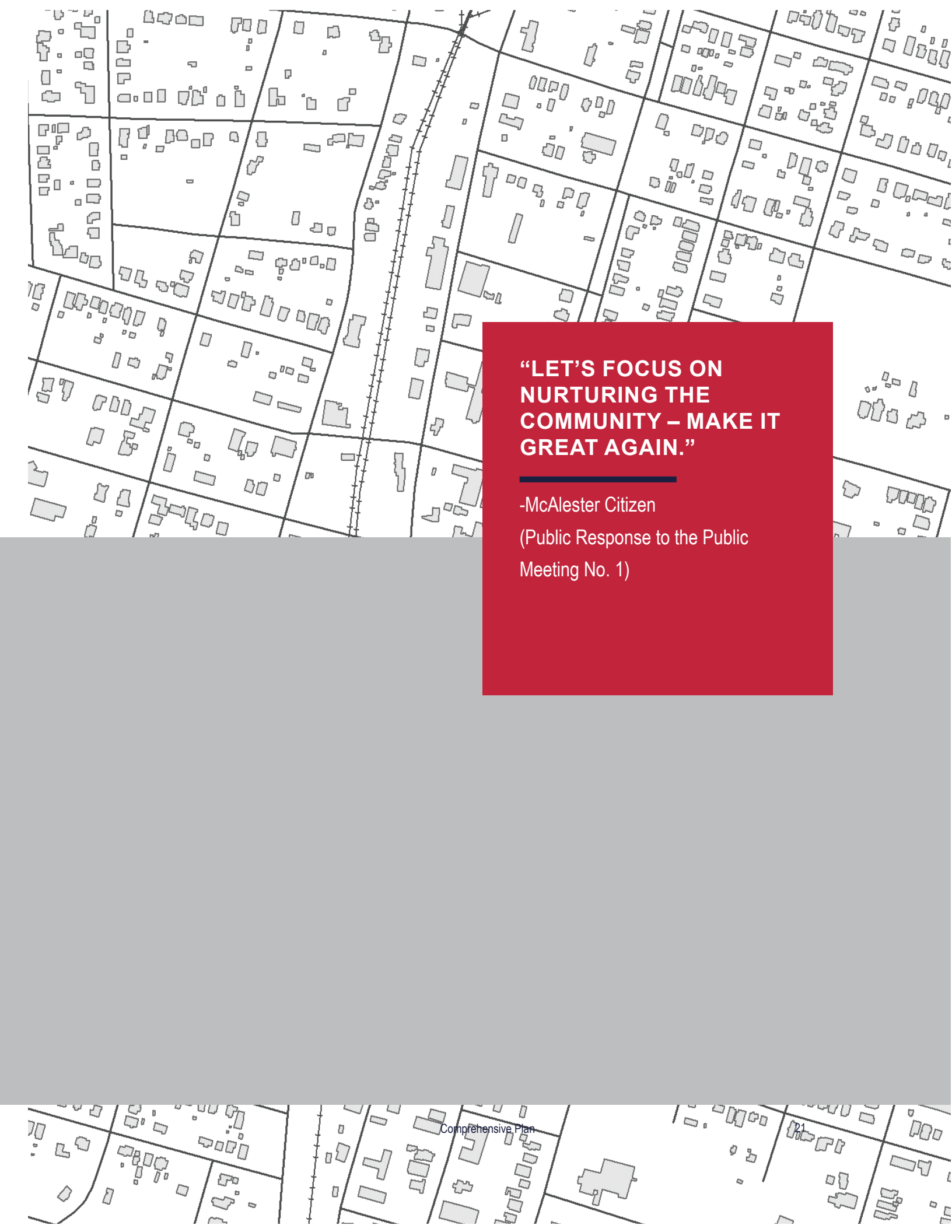**8** COMMUNITY FACILITIES + SERVICES

**9** COMMUNITY HEALTH

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**"LET'S FOCUS ON NURTURING THE COMMUNITY – MAKE IT GREAT AGAIN."**

-McAlester Citizen

(Public Response to the Public Meeting No. 1)

# 1 DEMOGRAPHICS

The population of McAlester grew to 18,802 at its peak in 1970. Based on the 2010 U.S. Census, the population in McAlester was 18,363, which is a 3.4% increase from 17,783 in the 2000 U.S. Census. At that time, McAlester was one of eight "micropolitan" areas in Oklahoma experiencing growth as people migrated to small cities, according to the U.S. Census. The population in McAlester decreased after 2010. In 2013, the U.S. Census named McAlester one of the fastest-shrinking towns in the nation, according to an article published by Tulsa World. This recent decline, however, was due to significant down sizing of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary population, not a result of loss in city population . As shown in Table to the right, the population of McAlester decreased by 1.0% between 2010 and 2017. Pittsburg County has also lost population at a rate more than seven times greater than the City. The 2017 the City population was estimated to be 18,198.

In comparison, the nearby towns of Durant and Tahlequah have increased by 10.3% and 5.6%, respectively. Durant has many factors working in its favor. The combination of spillover growth from the Dallas metroplex, major employers choosing Durant because of the proximity to the Dallas market, a growing Southeastern Oklahoma State University student population, and being home to the Choctaw Nation's unofficial headquarters explains Durant's growth and points to opportunities for McAlester to also grow.

With migration in and out of the City, the composition of the population has changed over the last few decades. The Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) describes the diversity in the population as a "tapestry" and defines the segments of the population in terms of "LifeModes," which distinguish each group from the others by age, lifestyle preferences, and other characteristics they tend to have in common. Almost half of the population is considered to be part of the "Hometown" LifeMode, a group that is raising children in a close-knit community. With a median age of 36.2, which is roughly equal to that of the state and the United States (36.8 years), McAlester is an aging community. Millennials, who are between the ages of 18 and 35 today, in general are drawn to bigger cities, such as Austin and Raleigh where the median ages are 31.7 and 32.5. Oklahoma City's median age is 33.8, indicating that it, too, is attracting younger people.

By 2040, the population is projected to increase to 20,687, which is a 12.7% increase over 30 years. New growth will be due in part to area job growth. New residents will likely arrive as hundreds of positions at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant are filled.

**GENXURBAN**
- Gen X in middle age; families with fewer kids and a mortgage
- Gen X married couples, and a growing population of retirees
- About a fifth of residents are 65 or older; about a fourth of households have retirement income
- Own older single-family homes in urban areas, with 1 or 2 vehicles
- Live and work in the same county, creating shorter commute times

**17.9%**
Of population

**COZY COUNTRY LIVING**
- Empty nesters in bucolic settings
- Largest Tapestry group, almost half of households located in the Midwest
- Homeowners with pets, residing in single-family dwellings in rural areas; almost 30% have 3 or more vehicles and, therefore, auto loans
- Politically conservative and believe in the importance of buying American
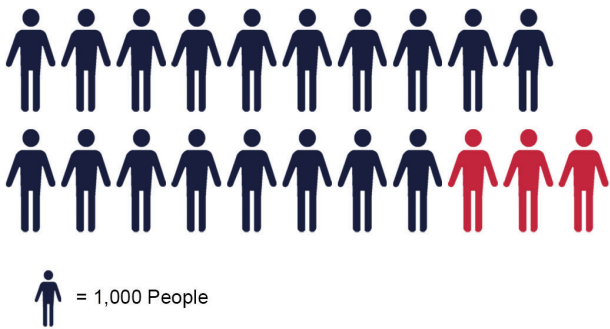- Own domestic trucks, motorcycles, and ATVs/UTVs

**20.8%**
Of population

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

# GROWTH RATE COMPARISON 2010-2017
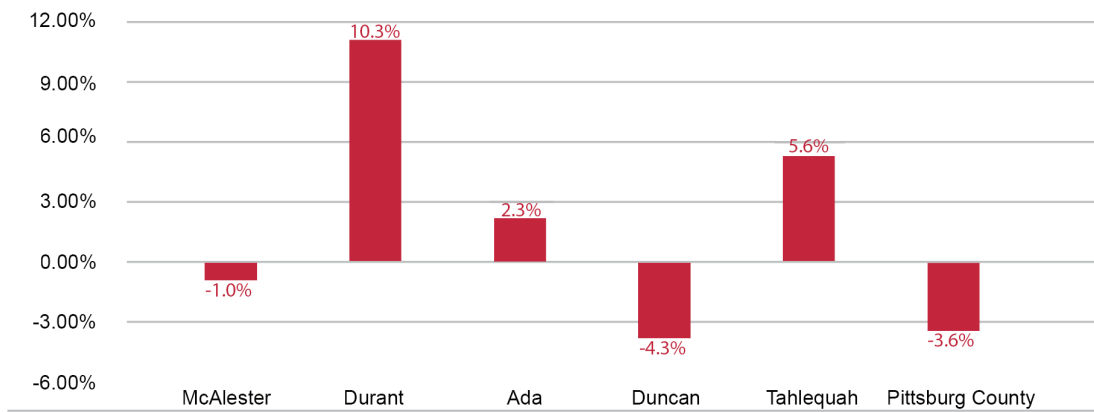


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), Updated annually

Chart values:
- McAlester: -1.0%
- Durant: 10.3%
- Ada: 2.3%
- Duncan: -4.3%
- Tahlequah: 5.6%
- Pittsburg County: -3.6%



= 1,000 People

**MCALESTER'S POPULATION IN 2017 WAS JUST OVER 18,000, AND ANOTHER 2,489 NEW RESIDENTS ARE EXPECTED BEFORE 2040**

Source: City of McAlester

## TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION PROFILE

Tapestry segmentation data is provided by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) which "provides an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods—U.S. residential areas are divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition—then further classifies the segments into LifeMode."

LifeMode definitions are provided below. Based on the data, most residents of McAlester are within the Hometown LifeMode. Generally, these people grow up and stay close to home because they value family and community.

### RUSTIC OUTPOSTS
- Country life with older families in older homes
- Rustic Outposts depend on manufacturing, retail and healthcare, with pockets of mining and agricultural jobs
- Low labor force participation in skilled and service occupations
- Own affordable, older single-family or mobile homes; vehicle ownership, a must

**3.7%**
Of population

### HOMETOWN
- Growing up and staying close to home; single householders
- Close knit urban communities of young singles (many with children)
- Owners of old, single-family houses, or renters in small multi-unit buildings
- Religion is the cornerstone of many of these communities

**45.2%**
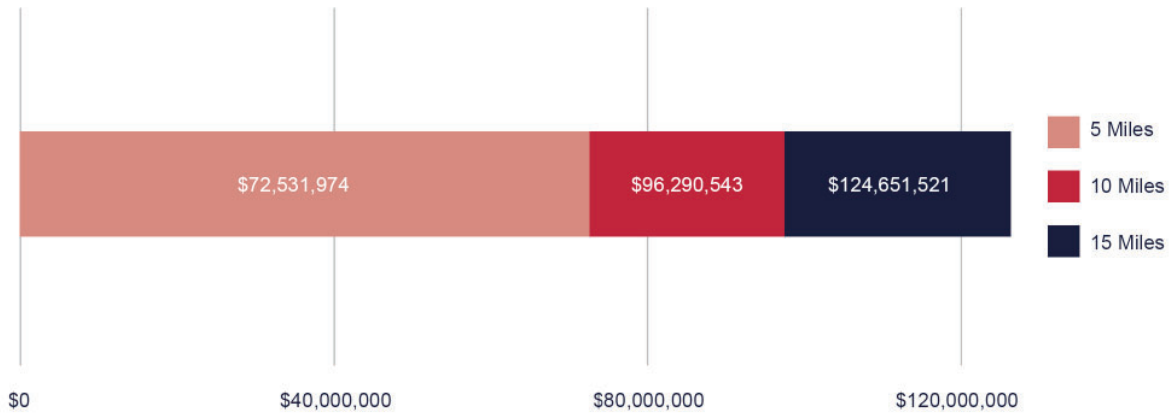Of population

# 2 MARKET CONDITIONS | ECONOMY

With a concentration of employment, shopping, and services in the City, McAlester serves as one of the regional economic hubs in Southeast Oklahoma. McAlester is home to Choctaw Defense Services, Spirit AeroSystems Incorporated, Berry Plastics Corporation, Krebs Brewing Company, and approximately 10,000 jobs. Shopping serves a trade area extending out 15 miles from the City.

Retail businesses in McAlester generate over $1,000,000 in sales tax revenue per month, which is normal for similarly sized cities in Oklahoma, such as Durant and Ada. The combined state and local sales taxes (Oklahoma has some of the highest rates in the United States) and the increase in internet sales is slowing retail growth. However, within the 15-mile area, there are opportunities to add specific types of retailers to capture approximately $125 million in retail sales that currently "leak" to other areas. (Refer to Figure 3 and Figure 4.) According to a report prepared by Retail Attraction, LLC, the top three retail categories with unmet demand are department stores (excluding leased departments), gasoline stations with convenience stores, and clothing and clothing accessories stores. Other categories include sporting goods, hobby, book, music, automotive parts, tire, and lawn/garden supply stores and special food services.

**5,481**

**People live in McAlester and work in McAlester**

**18,198**

**McAlester's population in 2017**

**6,352**

**People live outside of McAlester and work within McAlester**

FIGURE 3. COMMUTING PATTERN DIAGRAM

For decades, the local economy has been dependent upon activity at all levels of government, as public investment has been funded historically through Federal grants, and many of the jobs here and in the region are public-sector positions created by local, State, and Federal government entities. The McAlester Army Ammunition Plant (MCAAP), for example, opened in 1943 (as the McAlester Naval Ammunition Depot) and presently employs approximately 2,100 personnel. The Oklahoma State Penitentiary, which is within the city limits, employs 290 people. As the county seat of Pittsburg County, McAlester has a high percentage of workers employed in local government as well. Private sector jobs, however, contribute substantially to the local economy. Berry Plastics Corp. and Spirit AeroSystems Inc. employ, in combination, over 500 people. Choctaw Defense, a recipient of many large-scale government contracts, is also a major employer. The top five industries in McAlester are healthcare/social assistance, public administration, manufacturing, retail trade, and accommodation and food services. About half of the nearly 12,000 jobs in the City are held by workers commuting into the City everyday. With a labor force in the County of only 7,133 employees, which is up 1% from the prior year, the employers in McAlester are drawing workers from a much broader geography. Many residents leave the City for work; more than 3,000 people commute to jobs outside of McAlester, primarily those at the MCAAP.

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| $72,531,974 | $96,290,543 | $124,651,521 |

5 Miles
10 Miles
15 Miles

$0          $40,000,000          $80,000,000          $120,000,000

Source: Retail Attractions,LLC

| RETAIL CATEGORY ANNUAL LEAKAGE | 5 MILE |
|---|---|
| Non-Store Retailers | $30,149,483 |
| Department Stores, Excluding Leased Departments | $10,767,721 |
| Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores | $10,577,997 |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | $8,821,728 |
| Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music, Stores | $3,416,825 |
| Automotive Parts/Accessories, Tire Stores | $2,974,012 |
| Lawn/Garden Equipment/Supplies Stores | $2,956,680 |
| Special Food Services | $2,849,528 |
| TOTAL LEAKAGE | $72,513,974 |

| RETAIL CATEGORY ANNUAL LEAKAGE | 10 MILE |
|---|---|
| Non-Store Retailers | $39,066,165 |
| Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores | $13,676,297 |
| Department Stores, Excluding Leased Departments | $13,487,522 |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | $11,857,269 |
| Food & Beverage Stores | $5,434,592 |
| Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music, Stores | $4,789,883 |
| Automotive Parts/Accessories, Tire Stores | $4,336,740 |
| Special Food Services | $3,642,075 |
| TOTAL LEAKAGE | $96,290,543 |

| RETAIL CATEGORY ANNUAL LEAKAGE | 15 MILE |
|---|---|
| Non-Store Retailers | $48,021,724 |
| Department Stores, Excluding Leased Departments | $20,635,777 |
| Gasoline Stations with Convenience Stores | $17,463,058 |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | $16,358,747 |
| Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, Music, Stores | $6,689,865 |
| Automotive Parts/Accessories, Tire Stores | $5,966,571 |
| Lawn/Garden Equipment/Supplies Stores | $4,922,328 |
| Special Food Services | $4,593,451 |
| TOTAL LEAKAGE | $124,651,521 |

FIGURE 4. RETAIL OPPORTUNITY GAPS BY DISTANCE

# MAJOR EMPLOYERS
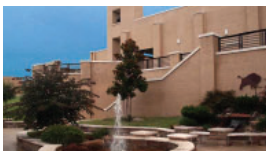


McAlester Public Schools



McAlester Army Ammunition Plant



McAlester Regional Health Center



National Oilwell Varco Inc.



Oklahoma State Penitentiary



Spirit AeroSystems Inc.



Choctaw Defense

*https://livability.com/ok/ mcalester/business/top- employers-in-mcalester-ok*

## TOP INDISTRIES

The need for more living-wage jobs and job training is evident. In 2017, the median household income level was $43,382, which is low compared to State and Federal levels. The City's unemployment rate in 2017 ended at the rate of 4.5%. The unemployment rate is just slightly higher than the 4.0% unemployment rate for Oklahoma and slightly higher that the rate for the United States, which was 4.1% (Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics with the U.S. Department of Labor). At 20%, the percentage of residents living below the poverty line is substantially higher than the State (16.3%) and the U.S. (12.3%). Poverty rates are defined as the percentage of people who had incomes below the poverty line ($24,860 for a family of four) in 2017.

While the City promotes itself as "a premier Defense Sector community with a unique workforce for the production of high-precision hardware," the economic development strategy is comprehensive and multifaceted. McAlester Economic Development focuses its efforts on the following:

Source:
2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

**HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE**

**PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**

**MANUFACTURING**

**RETAIL TRADE**

**ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES**

- Recruitment – While the City considers all economic opportunities, defense, aerospace, logistics, natural resources, tourism, and food processing have been identified as the economic clusters with the highest growth potential within the region. Recruitment activities include responding to requests for proposals, attending trade shows and recruitment events, and hosting three Oklahoma Southeast regional events annually. Sites are available in several locations to accommodate industrial growth, including Steven W. Taylor Industrial Park on the west side of the City.
- Retention/expansion – The City and community are helping existing industries expand. For example, Berry Plastics and Krebs Brewing Co. were assisted in their recent expansion projects. The best example of the retention program, though, is the work with the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant. City representatives participate in conferences and online seminars with the top officials at the Pentagon as well as the annual McAlester Stampede in which approximately 20 representatives of the McAlester Defense Support Association go to Washington, D.C. to advocate for the plant.

## AGE & POVERTY



| MCALESTER | OKLAHOMA | UNITED STATES |
|-----------|----------|---------------|
| **36.2** | **36.3** | **38.0** |
| Median Age | Median Age | Median Age |
| **20.0%** | **16.3%** | **12.3%** |
| Persons below poverty line | Persons below poverty line | Persons below poverty line |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

FIGURE 5. UNEMPLOYMENT AND POVERTY

- Start-ups – The City is helping entrepreneurs as they start businesses in McAlester. Helping new business owners find space, including in buildings along Choctaw Avenue in downtown, has helped several get their businesses off the ground. Additionally, the City recognizes opportunities for the craft food business and is seeking ways to grow it in McAlester, adding to the businesses that have already emerged.

- Downtown redevelopment – The City is leveraging the resurgence of downtown to attract investment. Knowing that a revitalized downtown contributes to the quality of life in McAlester, the City is promoting it as a destination, a place to live, and a place start a business.

- Quality of life improvements – Along with infrastructure availability, the quality of housing, schools, and amenities are among the factors influencing employers' location decisions. The City is actively addressing deficiencies and playing its efforts to compete for corporations and grow employment. (Refer to the Housing section for more information.)

- Workforce development – The City recognizes that workforce training is key to the successful recruitment of jobs. So, the City is also promoting the programs offered by area institutions, including Eastern Oklahoma State College and Kiamichi Technology Centers, to align the needs of prospective employers with the skills of the local workforce. City staff works directly with these institutions to help bridge the gap between employers and educators.

**52** % of survey respondents that selected this goal from the previous plan as still relevant today:
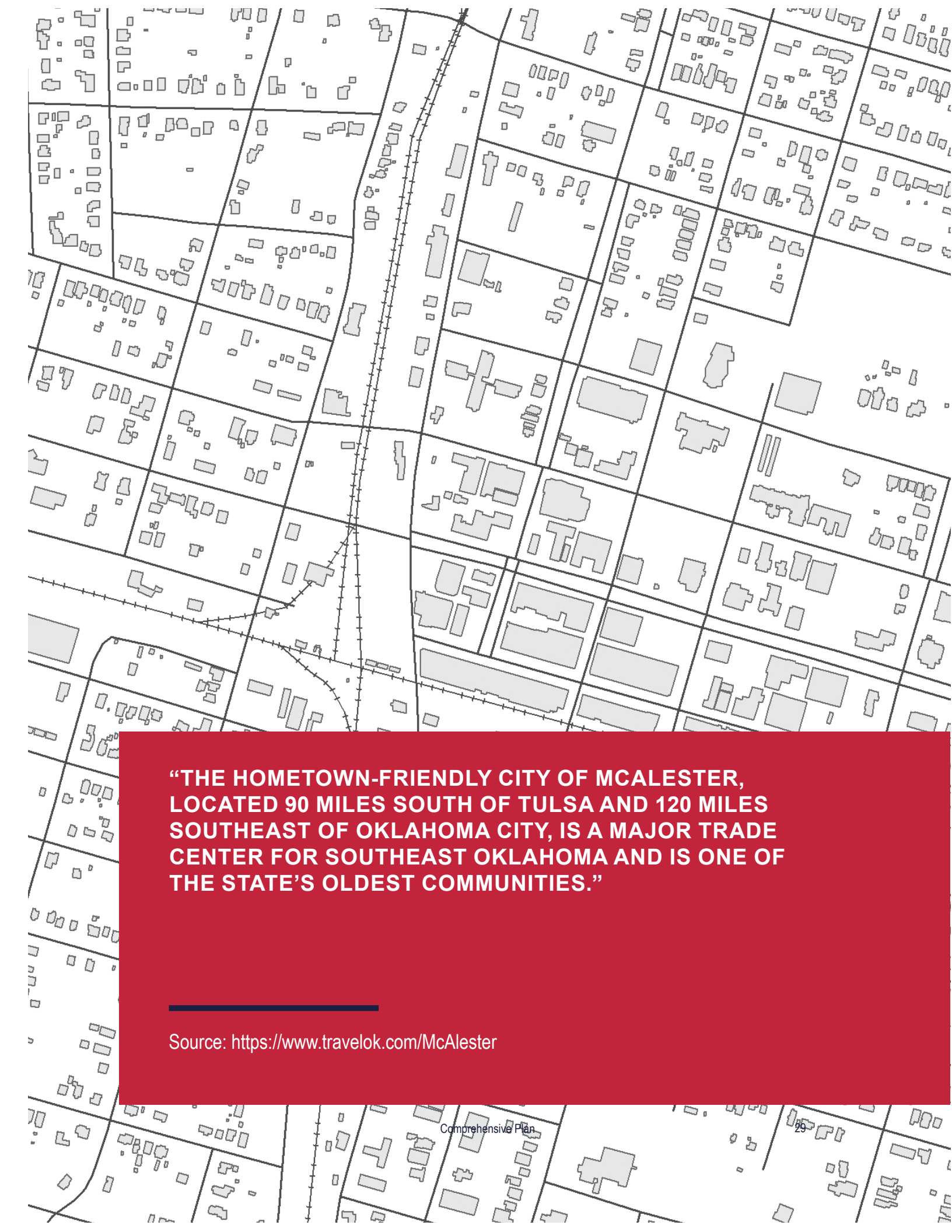
"Assure economic development in McAlester will enhance and enrich the quality of life."



Events in Old Town and at the Expo Center help draw visitors to McAlester.

Tourism is another aspect of the local economy. The City of McAlester has an active Tourism department, which is staffed by two people operating out of the J.J. McAlester Building downtown, that also houses the Visitor's Bureau, McAlester Main Street, and Pride in McAlester. In addition to promoting the City's local attractions, events, and businesses, the department oversees the McAlester Expo Center bookings. They actively recruit new events and shows to the community, often relying on the capacity of the 80,000-square-foot Expo Center, the largest event center in the area, as the lure.

"THE HOMETOWN-FRIENDLY CITY OF MCALESTER, LOCATED 90 MILES SOUTH OF TULSA AND 120 MILES SOUTHEAST OF OKLAHOMA CITY, IS A MAJOR TRADE CENTER FOR SOUTHEAST OKLAHOMA AND IS ONE OF THE STATE'S OLDEST COMMUNITIES."

Source: https://www.travelok.com/McAlester

# 3 LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT CHARACTER

The development pattern in McAlester clearly reflects the City's evolution outward from two historic centers: the center of the original city (Old Town) and the center of "South McAlester" (Downtown). As noted previously, the area now known as Old Town pre-dates the development of the heart of modern-day McAlester. Though the two municipalities became one in 1907, their prior existence is still evident today in the existing development pattern with its historic buildings and other remnant features. The following summarizes the character areas that comprise the City. Each emerged during a specific period of growth and are distinguished from others by the type and scale of development, the parcel sizes, street network, and the amount of open space within. Places associated with the various character areas are generally indicated in the diagram (Figure 6).

FIGURE 6. CHARACTER AREA LOCATION DIAGRAM

1. Old Town – The original City of McAlester, which surrounds the intersection of North Main Street East Krebs Avenue, has a combination of 1- and 2-story buildings. Most are located about 15 feet from the street.

2. Downtown (formerly South McAlester) – The initial boundaries are evident in Figure 6 where the street grid parallels the rail line. It developed between 1872 and 1889. Here, buildings vary in scale. Most are 2-story buildings. The buildings with large footprints house governmental, civic, cultural, and institutional uses. Streets are wide with narrow sidewalks. Very little open space is present.

3. Later, when J.J McAlester moved his company south in 1892-1893, the City expanded to the south. This southern area repeated the north-south grid of Old McAlester, but the parcel sizes in the residential areas increased. The connected street pattern contributes to the accessibility of the older neighborhoods. South McAlester was incorporated in 1899.

4. Highway 69 has pulled development in a southeasterly direction in recent years. Such newer development is characterized by larger parcels, larger building footprints, and less connected streets.

5. Neighborhoods south and east of Highway 69 are comprised of large-lot residential neighborhoods. With one point of entry into each, these neighborhoods are served by dead-end and looping roads and are disconnected from adjacent areas.

6. Steven Taylor Industrial Park was annexed into the City in September 2013. Like the area around the airport, the 500-acre park is a conventional industrial development with highway and rail access and accommodating some of the more intense manufacturing operations in the City and, due to incompatibility, are necessarily distanced from other development in the City.

7. Unincorporated areas that surround the City are comprised of undeveloped and agricultural lands. The lack of infrastructure has helped maintain this rural environment.
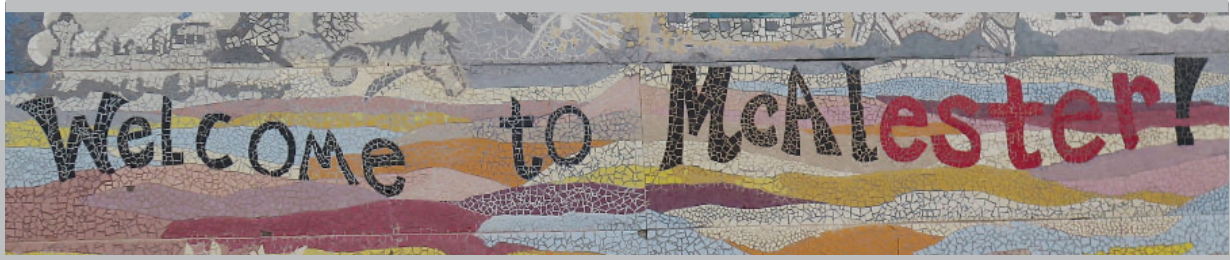
**Mural in downtown McAlester**

The number of building permits have fluctuated as a result of the Great Recession and the subsequent recovery in the past eight years. As shown in Figure 7, the overall number of permits issued has decreased since 2014 and the proportion of residential permits has also decreased. The annual value of permitted development has been up and down between 2010 and 2018, dropping from approximately $25M dollars in 2010 to a low of $11M in 2011 and then back up to its highest point of roughly $30M in 2014. In 2017, the total was just under $30M, but 2018 is expected to finish lower than 2011 around $10M (refer to Figure 8). Therefore, while commercial and other nonresidential development has been increasing, the relative value is low so it has not compensated for the loss in residential investment.



Number of Annual Permits by Type, 2010-2018
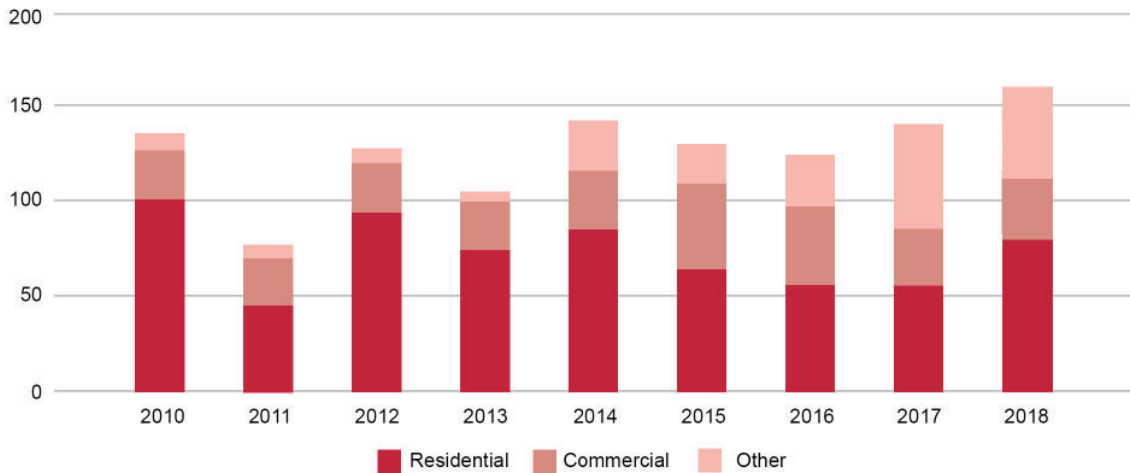
Note: Number of permits shown include new construction, additions, and alterations.

Source: City of McAlester

*FIGURE 7: BUILDING PERMITS BY TYPE, 2010-2018*

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

Comprehensive Plan

**41% OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS SAID THAT MCALESTER NEEDS MORE HOUSING OPTIONS IN ORDER TO ATTRACT NEW JOBS.**

-Survey No. 2 Results

### Building Permits - Total Annual Value, 2010 - 2018



Note: Number of permits shown include new construction, additions, and alterations.
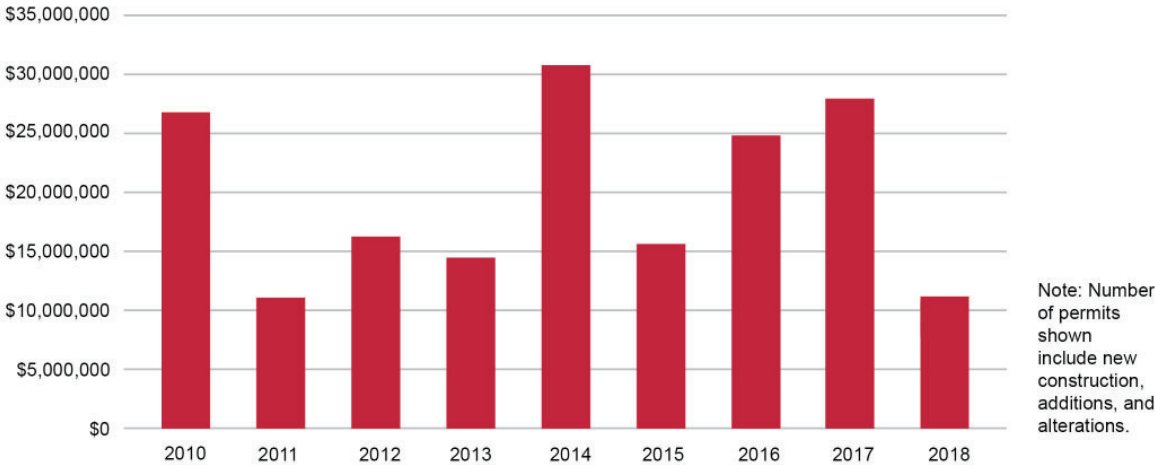
Source: City of McAlester

*FIGURE 8: BUILDING PERMITS AND ANNUAL VALUE, 2010-2018*

The City's land development regulations reinforce the development practices of the post-WWII era. Therefore, the development that has occurred recently continues the separation of uses and is predominantly auto-oriented due to the scale of buildings, blocks, and the lack of street connectivity. With amendments to the local regulations, the City is making a concerted effort to facilitate the kind of development in which citizens have expressed a desire, including smaller housing units on smaller lots as well as walkable, mixed-use development where shopping, dining, entertainment, and employment are in close proximity to homes.



*CURRENT WARD MAP (2018)*

**McALESTER ZONING MAP**
JANUARY 29, 2014

| A-1 | | H-1 | |
|-----|--|-----|--|
| R-1a | | I-1 | |
| R-1B | | I-2 | |
| R-2 | | | |
| R-3 | | | |
| C-1 | | | |
| C-2 | | | |
| C-3 | | | |
| C-4 | | | |
| C-5 | | | |

" This is to Certify that this is the official
ZONING MAP of the City of McAlester."

By:
Steve Harrison, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cora Middleton, City Clerk
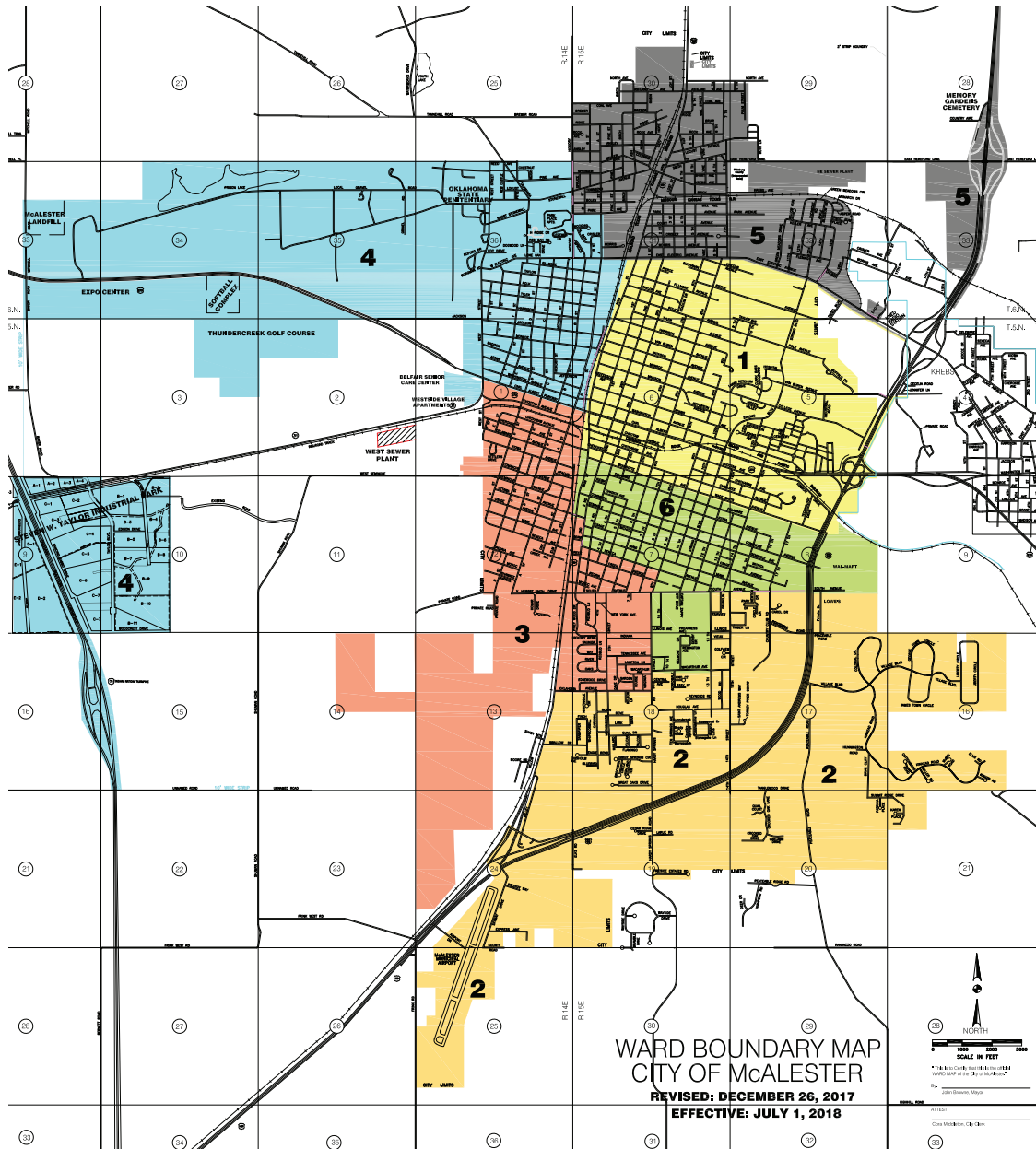
*FIGURE 9: CURRENT ZONING MAP (2014)*

# 4 HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS

Nearly 150 years old, the City has homes representing many eras, two decades in particular: 1900-10 and 1940-50. At the center of the City, within two blocks of Carl Albert Parkway, homes that date back to the early 1900s are plentiful. These homes appear to have been built around the time of the construction of the Oklahoma State Penitentiary. These homes, wh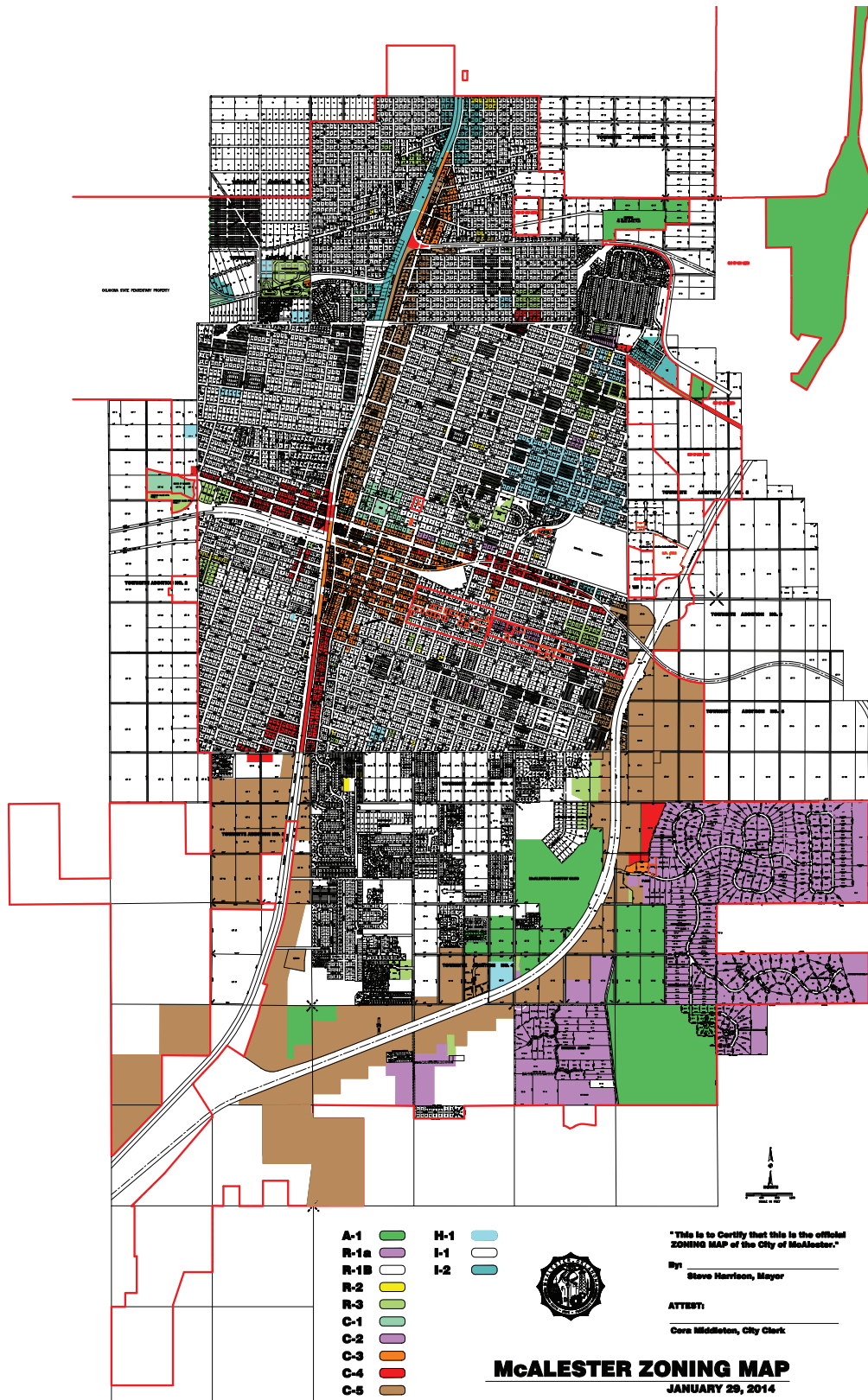ich were built to house workers moving into the area, are typically Victorian architecture, reflective of the Victorian era's influence on design at the time. To withstand the test of time, these homes require a considerable amount of restoration and maintenance, so many have fallen into disrepair. Other than the McAlester House and the Warden's House, none are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. According to the Oklahoma Historical Society, "In 1942, two large government projects strained the town's housing capacity." These projects were the U.S. Naval Ammunition Deport (which later became the Army Ammunition Plant, or MCAAP, in 1977) and a POW Camp. The population increased by the thousands starting with construction of each. In the mid-20th century, the City experienced a housing boom, so much of the housing in the City was built between 1940 and 1950. These homes are generally located in the neighborhoods that lie north and south of downtown.



Left: McAlester House
Right: the Warden's House

In recent decades, a new crop of neighborhoods have popped up. In contrast to the older neighborhoods, these newer neighborhoods with dead-end and curvilinear streets are less connected. Lots are larger, and homes are generally new suburban contemporary-style homes with two stories. Over time, the mix of housing products in existing neighborhoods has expanded through infill and redevelopment. The variety, which includes manufactured homes and mobile homes, remains predominantly (83%) detached single-family homes. The other 17% is comprised of apartments and attached single-family units.

Roughly 40% of the housing units are occupied by renters, a rate that is typically an indicator of low affordability, but McAlester is actually very affordable. The median home value at $98,600 is much lower than that of the state and the US, and it is frequently promoted as one of the most affordable places to live. There is a component of the population that is comprised of temporary residents who come to work in McAlester on short-term assignments. MCAAP employees, who are among them, earn better-than-average salaries and wages, but appear reluctant to purchase a home; hence, rental housing is and will continue to be an important component.

**Victorian and post-WWII homes are common here in terms of existing stock, with new suburban contemporary-style homes becoming the new normal.**

In 2017, 61.4% of the housing units in McAlester, OK were occupied by their owner. This percentage grew from the previous year's rate of 60.4%. This is showing that more people are able to purchase and own their own homes. McAlester has been ranked at the cheapest place to live in the country based on the 2015 ACCRA Cost of Living index. The index ranking is based on six components – housing, utilities, grocery items, transportation, health care and miscellaneous goods and services. In McAlester, the largest share of households have a property value in the $100k - $125k range and the average home appreciation is up 12.2%. This is another indicator of affordable housing and the benefit of investing in homeownership for the population of McAlester.

## HOUSING UNITS

**8,199** HOUSING UNITS

**$98,600** MEDIAN HOME VALUE
OKLAHOMA $125,800
UNITED STATES $193,500

**83%** SINGLE UNIT

**15%** VACANCY RATE

OWN VS RENT

38.6% RENT

61.4% HOMEOWNERSHIP

Source: 2017 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates-Census Bureau

**MCALESTER**
$41,112
Median Income
2.39
Persons per household

**OKLAHOMA**
$46,879
Median Income
2.58
Persons per household

**UNITED STATES**
$53,889
Median Income
2.64
Persons per household

Source: 2017 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates-Census Bureau



WICHITA AVE.

E. OSAGE AVE.

E. MIAMI AVE.

E. SOUTH AVE.

COUNTRY CLUB RD./S. 17TH ST.

NEWTON DR.

PARK DR.

CIRCLE DR.

COUNTRY CLUB RD./S. 17TH ST.

CAROL DR.

*Neighborhood Contrast Study - new neighborhood layouts (purple) vs. old neighborhood layouts (pink)*

Housing Projections, McAlester

| Year | Number of Housing Units |
|------|------|
| 2020 | 8,293 |
| 2025 | 8,529 |
| 2030 | 8,764 |
| 2035 | 8,999 |
| 2040 | 9,236 |

*5-, 10-, 15-, and 20-year housing projection, McAlester*
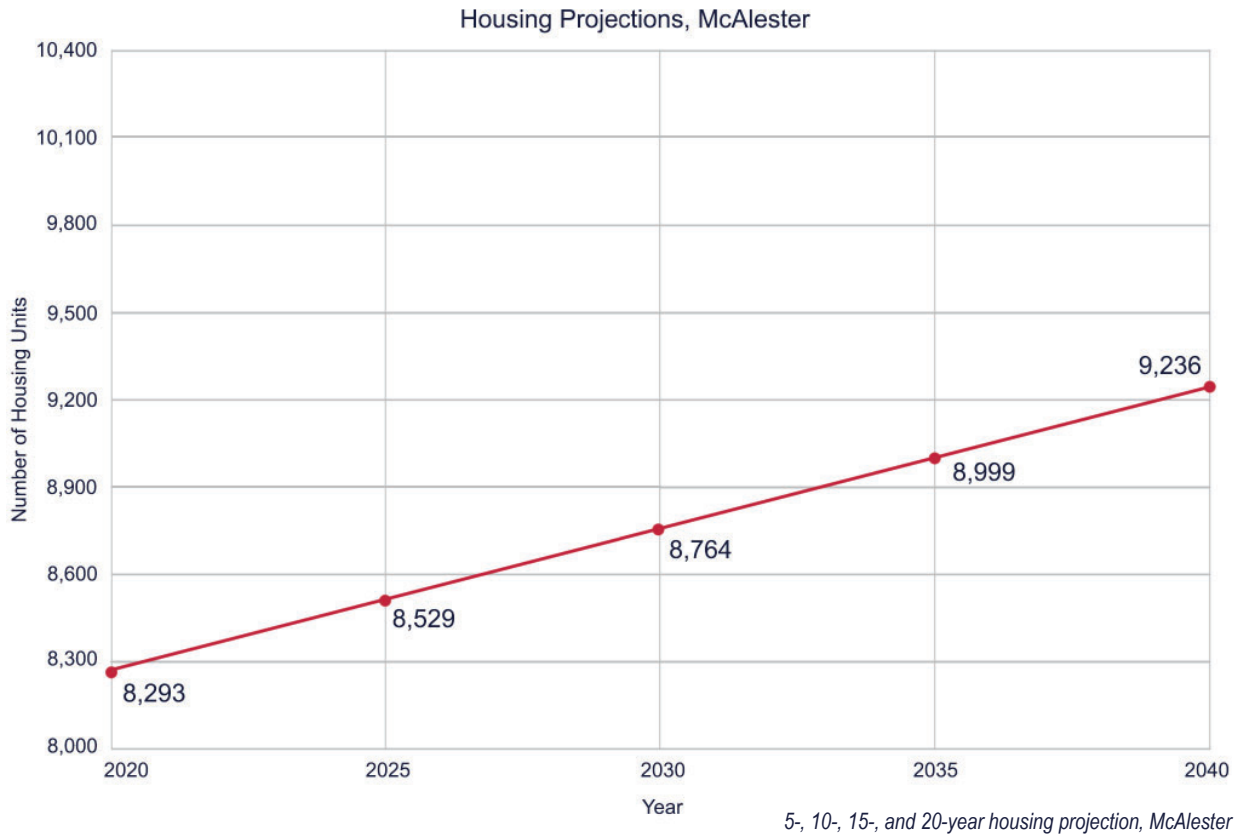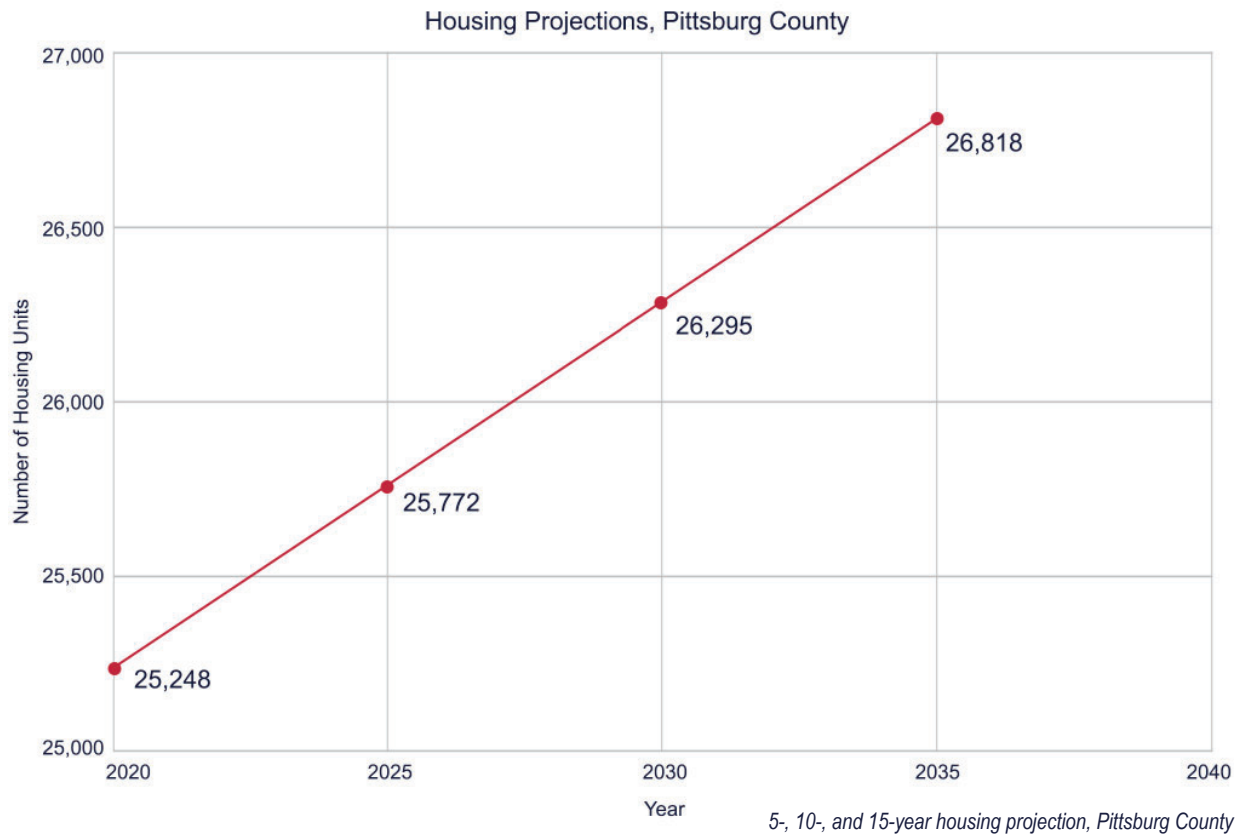
At 2.4 persons per household, the City will most likely need to accommodate approximately 1,037 new households over the next 20 years. The City has over 8,199 existing housing units with about 15% currently vacant. Some portion of the future housing demand will likely be satisfied with existing housing stock, but the city's future stance on product type to support future growth will need to be accessed as the demand grows. The remaining demand will be met with new construction in new neighborhoods or infill lots in existing neighborhoods.

Stakeholders interviewed early in the planning process noted that current housing options in McAlester do not appeal to most people moving to the area for work and considering McAlester as their new home. Housing quality as well as the range of housing types fall short of expectations.

The types of housing that the future population will seek include a variety of products, some of which are not readily available in McAlester. Consistent with changing preferences evident in most markets across the US, people over 65 and young adults are investing in smaller units on smaller lots. According to Robert Charles Lesser & Co. (RCLCo), "communities that sell more houses generally offer more housing options that appeal

Housing Projections, Pittsburg County

26,818

26,295

25,772

25,248

*5-, 10-, and 15-year housing projection, Pittsburg County*

to…millennials and active adults/empty-nesters." Furthermore, these age groups are creating a strong market for apartments and condominiums. Some senior housing is available in McAlester, but demand is so high that waiting lists are common. Age-in-place options are becoming more popular; seniors are choosing to stay in their homes or neighborhoods when the building design and proximity to services allows them to do so. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are also becoming acceptable again as they are suitable for aging parents as well as millennials choosing to live with their parents. "The number of young folks living with parents became the most common kind of living arrangements for U.S. residents ages 18-34 in 2018," according to the Pew Center.

In 2018, the City amended its zoning regulations to allow smaller lots to reduce the number of nonconforming lots in existing neighborhoods. Minimum lot sizes specified in the Land Development Code (6,000 sf) were larger than the lots sizes in many of the established neighborhoods (4,500 sf). Nonconforming lots interfere with potential homeowners' ability to obtain loans, which is critical for encouraging investment in existing structures, particularly those in the City's historic neighborhoods.

*Left to right: Historic home on Creek Avenue; a 1950s-era home off of Cardinal Lane; a new home constructed around 2000; a manufactured home off of S. West Street.*

# 5 PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE +
# NATURAL RESOURCES

Located in the southeastern part of Oklahoma, the City of McAlester is situated in an area that is rich with natural resources. Historically, energy sources, such as coal, have attracted people to the area. In fact, 1,012,000 tons of coal resources remain in the McAlester Coalbed, which is thickest in Pittsburg and Coal Counties (mines.ok.gov). But it is the lakes, rivers, forests, scenic views and other natural assets that keep some residents here and entice visitors to the region. The USDA Soil Conservation Service characterizes the landscape in Pittsburg County as "smoothly rolling to nearly level" terrain covered by tall native grasses, which give way to the hilly woodlands and sandstone cliffs of the Sans Bois Mountains in the east. Here, residents of McAlester have access to some of the best fishing, hunting, camping, and hiking that the state has to offer. For this reason, an estimated 2-million visitors are drawn to this "Choctaw Country" region annually. Popular destinations, including Lake Eufaula State Park, Lake McAlester, and Robbers Cave State Park are within a 30-mile drive of McAlester (source: https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry.php?entry=LA007).

Open space conservation is important for protecting the natural features that define these and many other places, adding to the quality of each experience. Lake Eufaula, for instance, relies on high quality water suitable for swimming and supporting aquatic life. It is the location of over 30 fishing tournaments each year, some of which are nationally televised. However, the lake has been classified as "impaired" for fish and wildlife propagation and recreational uses, based on the 2008 Integrated Water Quality Assessment Report. A reservoir built in 1930, Lake McAlester is a city drinking water supply. It, too has been classified as impaired. McAlester lies within the Eufaula Watershed Planning Region, 1 of 13 such regions in the state. Surface water flows to Eufaula Lake through Mud Creek on the east side and through Coal Creek via Sandy Creek on the west side. The floodplains that flank these creeks are substantially outside of the City of McAlester but are part of the same floodplain areas that are designated "source water protection areas" around Lake Eufaula.

The area is also home to many important wildlife habitats whose existence is dependent upon the preservation of contiguous tracts of undeveloped land and natural vegetation. Maintained wildlife areas are critical to the continuation of hunting, which is a popular activity in this area dubbed by some as "a true hunters' paradise." Together, hunting and fishing contribute millions of dollars to the state's economy annually, and McAlester, in close proximity to these key areas, benefits economically from these activities.
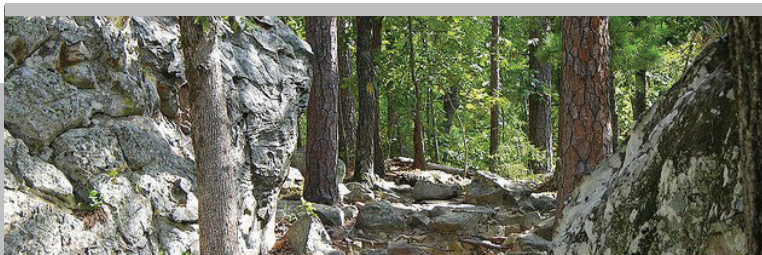


**Left: Robbers Cave State Park, an 8,246-acre park with three lakes, is the former hideout of outlaws Jesse James and Belle Starr.**



**Right: Lake Eufaula hosts over 30 fishing tournaments annually.**
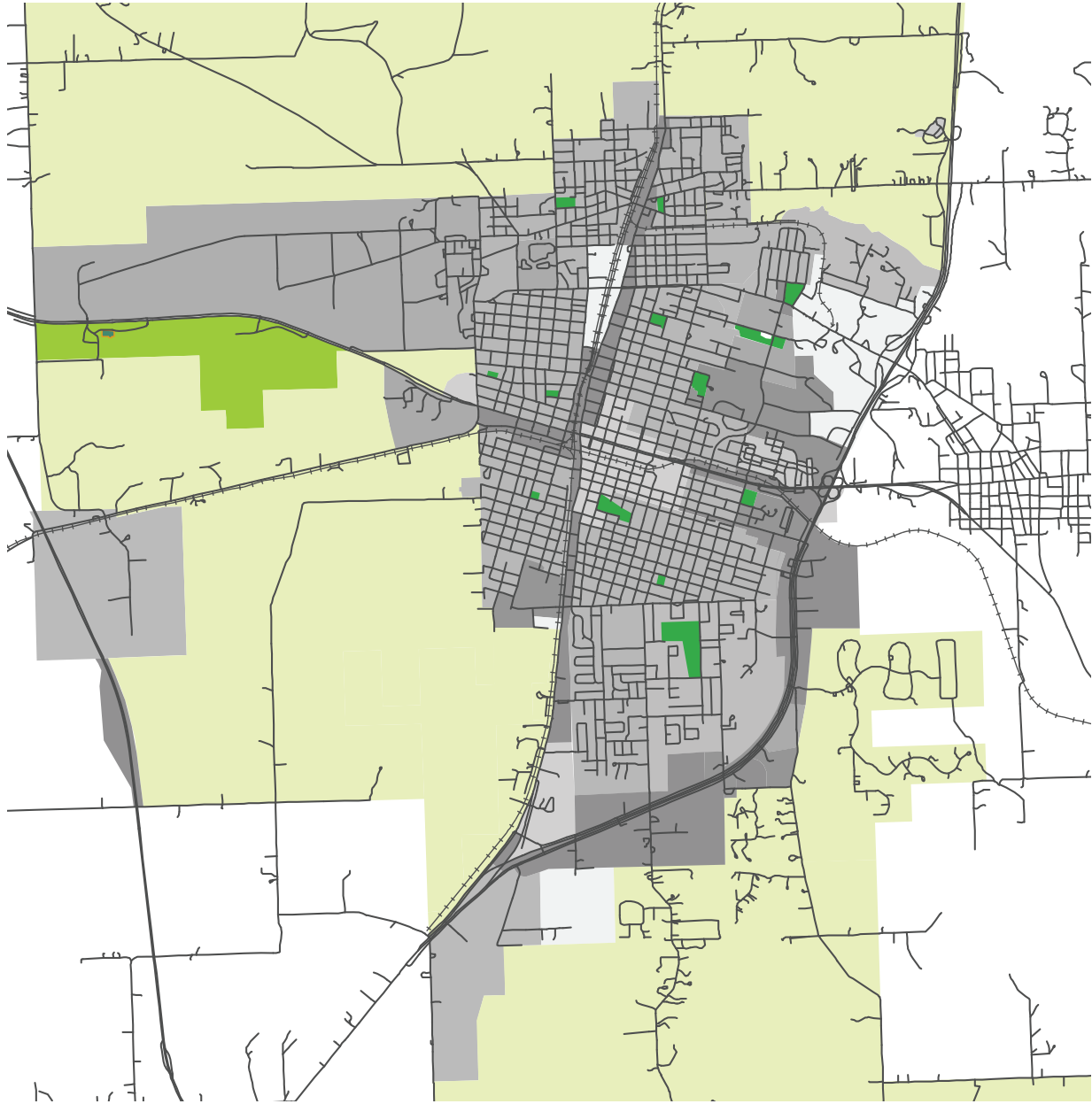
KEY

Existing Parks

Existing Open Space

Existing Recreation Area

NORTH

FIGURE 10. OPEN SPACE MAP

KEY

Existing Parks

1/2 Mile Walk to Existing Parks

NORTH

FIGURE 11: EXISTING PARKS (WITH ½-MILE SERVICE RADIUS)
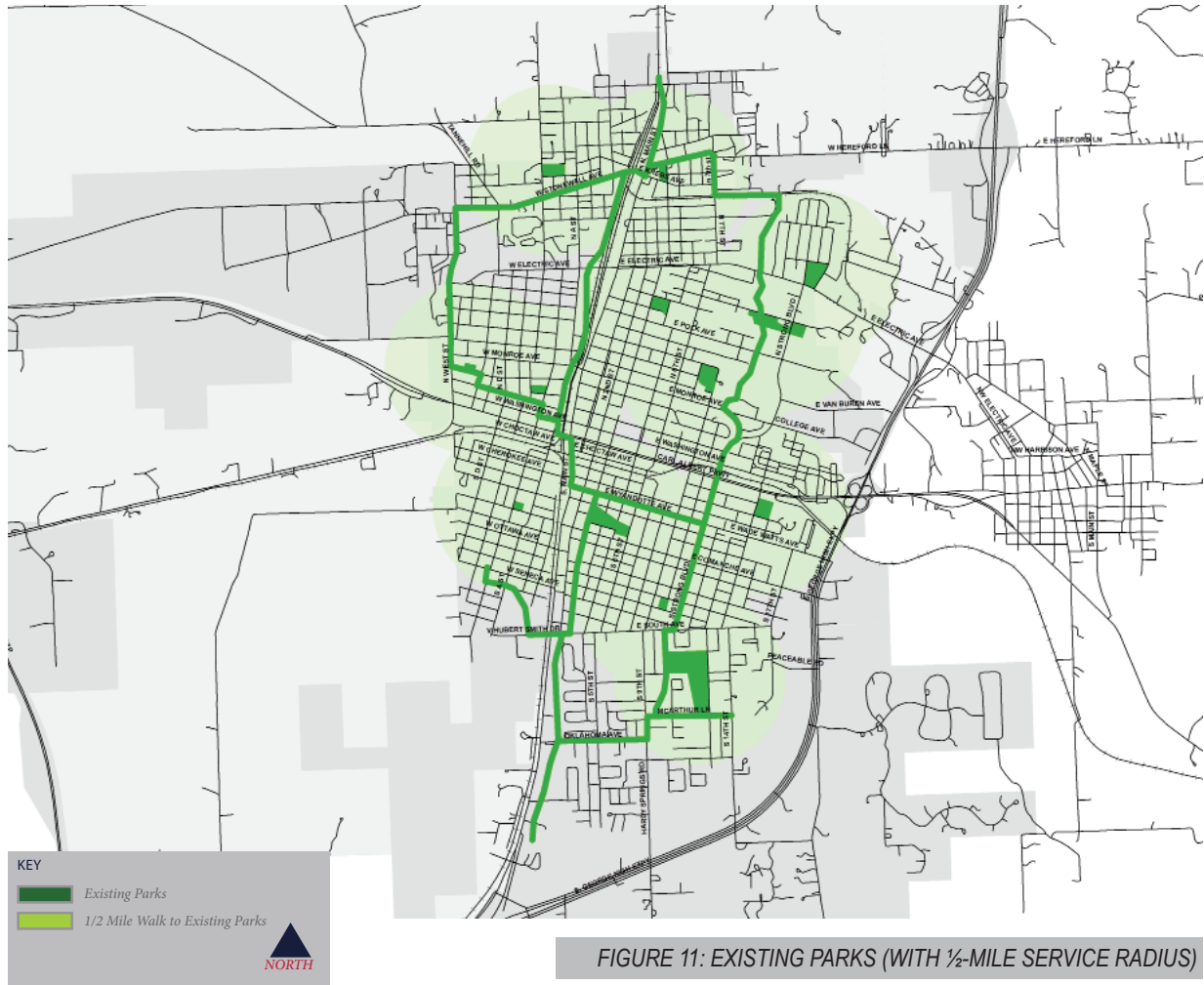
## PARKS IN MCALESTER

1. ARCHERY PARK
2. B & JEFFERSON PARK
3. CHADICK PARK
4. CONNALLY PARK
5. HUTCHISON PARK
6. JEFF LEE PARK
7. KOMAR PARK
8. MICHAEL J. HUNTER PARK
9. MULLEN PARK
10. PETE ROSSO
11. PUTERBAUGH PARK
12. ROTARY PARK
13. THUNDERBIRD PARK
14. WILL ROGERS PARK

Today, McAlester residents enjoy a variety of parks and recreation areas within and near the City. As shown in Figure 11, there is a park within ½-mile of approximately 60% of homes in McAlester. So, many residents live within walking distance of a park. The offerings at the parks vary in size from 1 to 28 acres. Chadick Park, for example, is a 10-acre park on the south side of the City. The park offers active and passive recreation including tennis courts and picnic areas. Encompassing 28 acres, Will Rogers Park is nearly three times the size of Chadick and has a baseball stadium and fields, a heavily-used walking track, and an arboretum, which is described as one of the largest collections of named cultivars of Oaks and Redbuds west of the Mississippi River. It is identified on the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department's website (travelok.com) as one of the state's "secret gardens." According to the City's website, "the McAlester Arboretum's collection is so unique and varied that it draws experts from throughout the nation to tour, test and share its plantings." The eight-acre Rotary Park has the 400-seat Elmer Hale Amphitheater, a walking/jogging trail, and a playground. Rotary Park also has Buffalo Run Disc Golf Course and is considered one of the top five disc golf courses in the state.

The City has two public swimming pools (Jeff Lee Park and J.I. Stipe Center) that the community enjoys from Memorial Day weekend to mid-August. Approximately 200-250 children participate in swimming lessons offered at the Jeff Lee Swimming Pool each year. Pools splash pads, and wading pools can also be found at the following parks:

Pools at Lee Park (operating), JI Stipe Recreation Center (operating), Mullen Park (closed), Hunter Park (closed).
Wading Pool and Splash Pad at Chadick Park (operating).
Wading Pool at Komar Park (operating), Hutchison Park (operating), B & Jefferson Park (closed).

Other amenities that meet some of the community's recreational needs include McAlester's Southeast Expo Center, which has a 50,000-square-foot arena and a dance floor.  On an adjacent tract of land is the Southeast Oklahoma Softball Complex. The property is operated and maintained by the City of McAlester and is leased from the Pittsburg County Regional Exposition Authority. It is recognized as one of the top softball complexes in the state. It features a four-field wagon wheel design with full concession, restrooms, score boxes, and offices. Softball leagues are offered for men, women and children beginning in April and running through the fall. There is also a dog park - Central Bark located at B St. & Seneca Ave. for all the dog lovers of the community.

**82%**

of survey respondents said that McAlester needs more amenities to attract new job opportunities

# 6 TRANSPORTATION + MOBILITY

A comprehensive Transportation Plan would greatly benefit the City of McAlester. A Transportation Plan will serve as an important tool in facilitating orderly urban and rural development, by identifying the location and type of roadway facilities that are needed to meet the area's projected growth. The Transportation Plan allows the City to determine and plan for their existing and future transportation improvement needs and to acquire adequate rights-of-way. A transportation plan is a means of assuring that basic infrastructure needs and right-of-way will be available when travel demand or development warrants new or improved roadway facilities.

## ROADWAY CONDITIONS

Roadways in the City of McAlester are not in great condition; they have not received the full funding necessary for their maintenance historically and the City does not have the necessary tax revenue to fund all its current commitments. This has led to underfunding of construction and maintenance of the roadways. Currently, sales taxes are financing roadway improvements, but the City lacks adequate sales tax revenue. That being said, it is usually easier to convince the public to fund roadway improvements than it is to fund infrastructure improvements, since roadways are visible. The ongoing funding issues have resulted in most of the road system having reached the end of its lifecycle; there is no Capital Improvement Projects system in place to prioritize the replacement of these roadways. Additionally, as will be discussed shortly, the citizenry has expressed a desire to extend bike lanes and sidewalks in certain areas, as well as improving lighting along these bike lanes and sidewalks, and along roadways in general. There has been a desire expressed for more streetscape projects by the public, as well. The McAlester Regional Airport may need improvements as well, as while it can accommodate smaller, regional jets, it cannot handle larger jets.

## TRAVEL COMMUTE
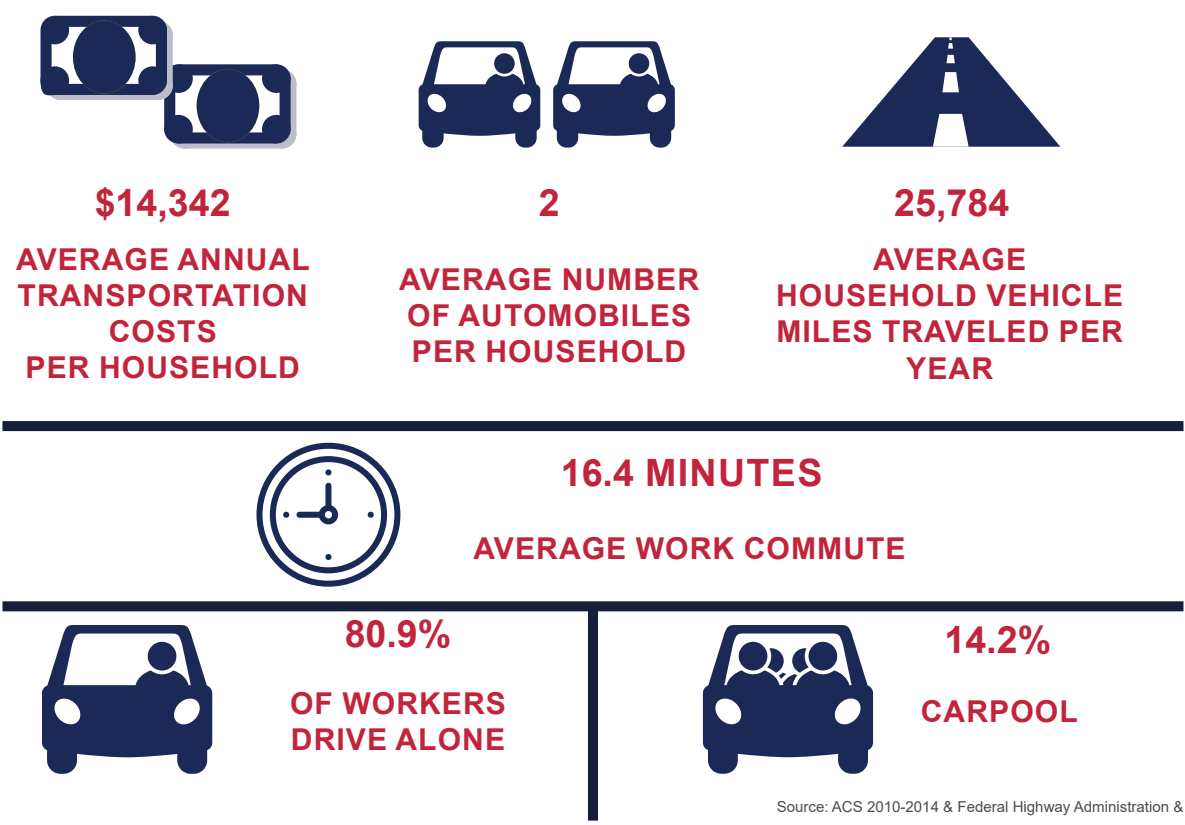
Using averages, employees in McAlester, OK have a shorter commute time (16.4 minutes) than the normal U.S. worker (25.1 minutes). Additionally, 2.78% of the workforce in McAlester, OK have "super commutes" in excess of 90 minutes.



**"MORE TRAILS, BETTER-DEVELOPED GREENWAYS, MORE PLACES TO WALK SAFELY." WAS AN ANSWER CHOSE BY 54% OF SURVEY RESPONDERS TO SURVEY NO. 2.**

--Public Survey No. 2

**$14,342**

**AVERAGE ANNUAL TRANSPORTATION COSTS PER HOUSEHOLD**

**2**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF AUTOMOBILES PER HOUSEHOLD**

**25,784**

**AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD VEHICLE MILES TRAVELED PER YEAR**

**16.4 MINUTES**

**AVERAGE WORK COMMUTE**

**80.9%**

**OF WORKERS DRIVE ALONE**

**14.2%**

**CARPOOL**

Source: ACS 2010-2014 & Federal Highway Administration & 2017 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates-Census Bureau

Knowing McAlester's commute time is important because it will effect the amount of dollars available to flow back into the economy and have effects on the wear-and-tear of the local street roads. The more cars on the road the more wear to the roads. The amount of time commuting can also effect the citizens well-being. A study into commuting and personal well being has found that each minute added to a commute affects anxiety, happiness and general wellbeing. Since, the public has spoken out about focusing on community well being, and transportation. This is an important topic to watch closely.

**CITY OF MCALESTER TRANSPORTATION MODES**

- **PERSONAL CAR**
- **BUS (GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL AT GAS MART)**
- **BUS (MCALESTER PUBLIC SCHOOL BUS)**
- **WHEEL-CHAIR ACCESSIBLE VAN (SERVICE PROVIDED BY THE SENIOR CITIZEN CENTER)**
- **TAXI SERVICES**
- **MCALESTER REGIONAL AIRPORT (JET CAPABLE)**
- **OIL (OKLAHOMANS FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING)**
- **KI BIOS (KATS KI BOIS BUS)**

# EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The transportation and mobility system forms one of the most visible and permanent elements of a community. It establishes the framework for community growth and development and along with the Future Land Use Plan, forms a long range statement of public policy. As the alignment and right-of-way (ROW) of major transportation facilities are established and adjacent property developed, a quality pattern of development will result. However, by incorporating programmed land uses and densities of the Future Land Use Plan, strategies can be developed that maximize the land use/transportation relationship.

The City of McAlester has a Current Priority Listing and Pavement Management System Program documenting their road systems from 2012. A Pavement Management System (PMS) is designed to provide objective information and useful data for analysis so that road managers can make more consistent, cost-effective, and defensible decisions related to the preservation of a pavement network. While a PMS cannot make final decisions, it can provide the basis for an informed understanding of the possible consequences of alternative decisions.

The Pavement Management System includes a list of roadway section functional classifications. The PMS classifications were compared to ODOT's classification of McAlester's highways and streets and also compared to visual observations of the traffic on major streets. An existing road network was developed which synthesized the PMS classifications, ODOT's classifications and the visual observations. The resulting existing network has been categorized by type as follows *(Source: Urban Roadway Classification)*:

**Principal Arterial -** Serves major centers of activity with the highest traffic volumes and longest trip lengths. Integrated internally and between major rural connections. Service to abutting lands is subordinate to travel service to major traffic movements. Design types are interstate, other freeways and other principal arterials. For McAlester, the primary arterials are all state highways.

**Minor Arterial** - Trips of moderate length at a lower level of mobility than principal arterials. Some emphasis on land access. May carry local bus routes and provide intracommunity continuity but does not penetrate neighborhoods.

**Collector** - Provides both land access and traffic circulation within all areas. Penetrates neighborhoods and communities collecting and distributing traffic between neighborhoods and the arterial streets.

**Local** - Primarily permits direct land access and connections to the higher order streets. Lowest level of mobility. Through traffic is usually deliberately discouraged.

The current road network map shows a grid of mostly local routes intersected by a few collector roads. The arterial roads are mainly on the outskirts of the City connecting interior roads to Highways 270 and 69. The highlighted roads on the map are those where commercial development has recently increased and hence where future public facilities and other development could continue. The following segments are highlighted:

1. Main Street
2. Strong Boulevard
3. Electric Avenue from D Street to Highway 69
4. South Avenue between Main Street and Strong Boulevard
5. Carl Albert Parkway between Main Street and Strong Boulevard
6. Wade Watts Avenue between Main Street and Strong Boulevard

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD PLAN 2040**

Comprehensive Plan

## Pavement Management System Program Update:

McAlester has been working to improve the existing streets to meet the best needs of the public. A ranking system was created as a part of the Pavement Managment System Program to indicate priority streets to focus on for renovations. The current ranking covers a range from 87-28 (87 being the highest priority to 28 being the lowest). Here is the status report for how much work has been accompished since the 2013 report.

| Report Rank | Completed |
|---|---|
| High Priority Streets (87-67) | 14 |
| Medium Priority Streets (68-49) | 14 |
| Low Priority Streets (48-28) | 0 |

*source: McAlester Public Works*

A few of the noteable projects completed included the following:
6th St., Kiowa (Canal)-Wyandotte (St. Repair)
Washington & 6th-8th St. (Street Repair)
Strong Ave. - 14th St. (Street Repair)
11th St. & Electric Ave. (Street Repair)
D St., Stonewall-Electric (Street Repair)
6th St. & Carl Albert (Asphalt Repair)

KEY

— Principal Arterial (Existing)
— Minor Arterial (Existing)
— Collector (Existing)
— Local (Existing)
— Future Priority Network

NORTH

ROAD NETWORK MAP

In order to create a realistic and opportunistic transportation plan, it is important to not only examine regional factors impacting McAlester, but also to understand planning efforts undertaken by the City. Meetings with City Staff and community leaders were conducted to gather information on recent transportation planning efforts. Information gathered at these meetings identified the following:

1. Find funding mechanisms to pay for road infrastructure rebuilding.
2. More streets and/or roads need to include pedestrian sidewalks.
3. Improve lighting along roads and sidewalks to increase safety.
4. Implement Complete Street priciples: Multimodal, Green Design, and Smart Systems.
5. Better-developed greenways along road systems.
6. There is a dire need for public transportation to serve the many local residents that do not have access to a car or walkable sidewalks.
7. Downtown right now is "caught in the middle" between car-centric and walkable development. The streets are too wide to be walkable, but the parking is too inconvenient to be car-centric.

**Respondents in public survey No. 2 communicated a major need for road improvements across McAlester. Responses regarding infrastructure improvements were commonplace, with a need for greater pedestrian and biking options also being mentioned.**

## HIGHWAY ACCESS

McAlester has several Oklahoma highways running through the City. With a central U.S. location and convenient access to Interstates 35 and 40, McAlester is well positioned for nationwide commerce. McAlester is regionally connected to the business markets in Tulsa, Oklahoma City, and Dallas/Fort Worth. Local highways and Expressways include: U.S. Highway 69 (N/S), Indian Nation Turnpike (N/S), U.S. Highway 270 (E/W), State Highway 31 (E/W). Oklahoma Interstates include: I-40 (40 miles away), I-44 (100 miles away), I-35 (130 miles away).

McAlester is ideally positioned for warehousing and distribution operations. U.S. Highway 69 / 75 is the primary transportation corridor that connects Dallas/Fort Worth to the American Midwest. Recent and planned highway improvement projects will allow U.S. Highway 69 to remain viable and support high-density truck traffic growth. Oklahoma Depertment of Transportation (ODOT) has several existing and planned projects within the McAlester city limits. Some of the work includes: Widening the US-69 bridges over Wade Watts Ave. and the Arkansas-Oklahoma Railroad, construction of on and off-ramps from US-69 to the frontage roads near Wade Watts Ave. north of Comanche Ave., adding a J-turn on US-69 on the northbound frontage road between Peaceable Rd. and Kinkead Rd. This is a temporary construction that will allow access across US-69 from the frontage roads in this area as access at Peaceable Rd. and Comanche Rd will be closed. This will be replaced in a future reconstruction project by a permanent turn around, removing the signalized light at Peaceable Rd. and Comanche Rd. and permanently closing direct access to these roads from US-69, a complete overlay and re-striping of the frontage roads from Kincad Rd. to Peaceable Rd. to make them one-way.

*Source: ODOT*



ODOT - US-69 IN MCALESTER PROJECT AREA MAP

# TRAILS MASTER PLAN

In 2011, McAlester employed LandPlan Consultants,Inc. to prepare the McAlester Trails Master Plan (Figure 12). This plan was developed with a series of corridor studys, including waterways/flood plain, abandoned railroads, electrical transmission lines, and roadways.

The McAlester Trails Master Plan offers recommendations for improving community access to outdoor resources by building a network of off-road multi-use paved trails and on-street linkages. The purpose of this Master Plan is to address the trail needs of community residents related to recreation, transportation, and economic pursuits.

At the public meetings, people expressed desires for the City to provide connectivity and alternative routes for walking and bicyles. Citizens said that they want "more developmental design that supports walkability and healthier, active lifestyles" (in survey no. 2). During the interactive map study - citizens had the opportunity to place stickers with specific meanings on areas around the city limits and illustrate their desired needs. Many of the stickers requested more trails, improvements to roads to make safer for pedestrians, and traffic calming design to help make alternative modes of transportation safer (sticker map can be found in the Appendix).

*Source: McAlester Trails Master Plan*



## Trails Master Plan Update:

The city has completed a portion of Belmont Trail (ID #14) and has begun a portion of the Water Way Trail (ID #5) that will extend from Electric Avenue to Filmore Avenue. There is a future sidewalk improvement identified for E Van Buren Avenue which is close to the PT Trail (ID #8) which is just north of Van Buren. There are two bicycle lane striping projects that follows the Strong Linkage (ID #25) from E Electric to E Washington and the Wade Watts Linkage (ID #27) from S Strong to S George Nigh Expressway.

**KEY**

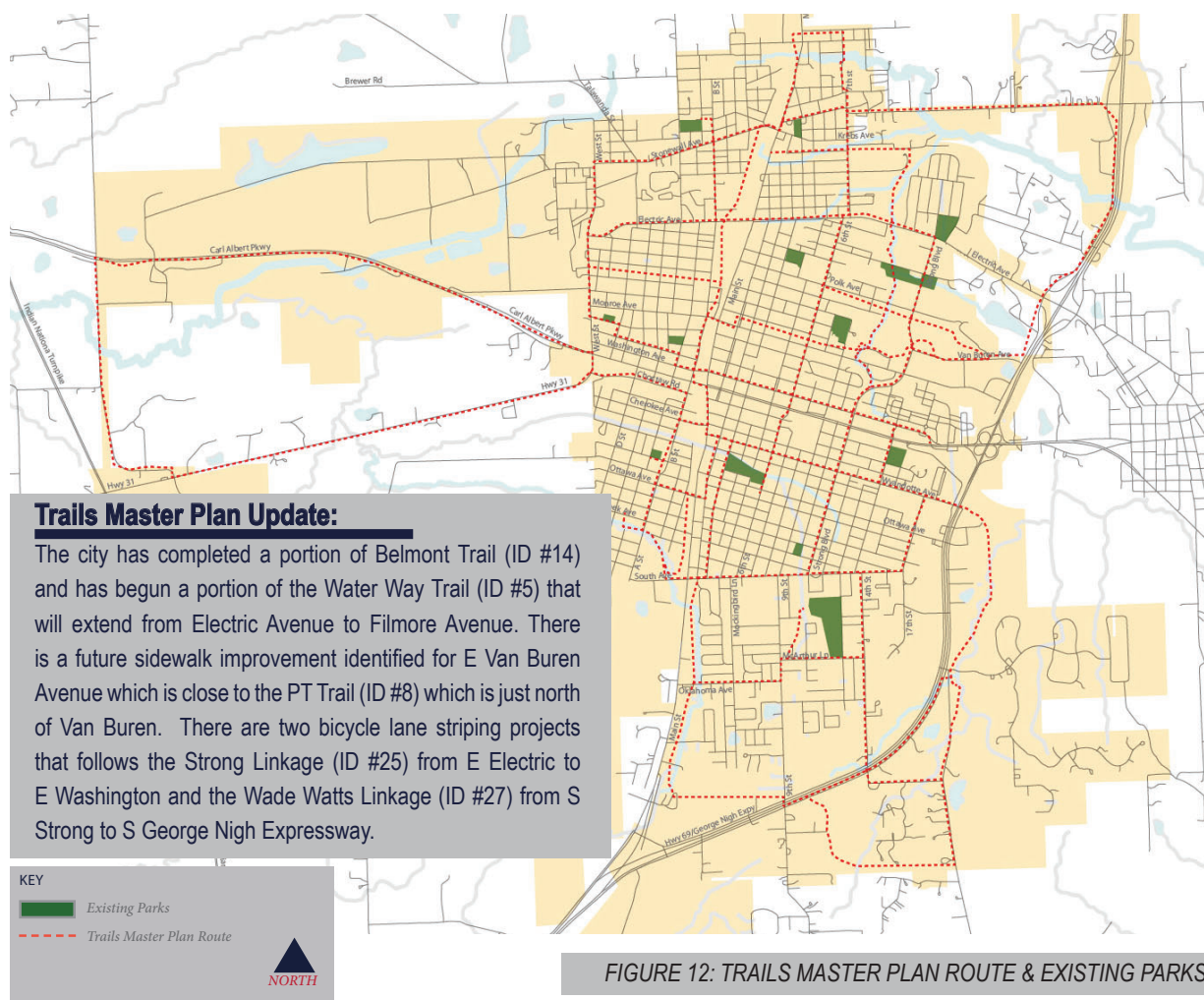Existing Parks

Trails Master Plan Route

NORTH

FIGURE 12: TRAILS MASTER PLAN ROUTE & EXISTING PARKS

# 7 INFRASTRUCTURE

McAlester, like most municipalities, manages its own sanitary and storm sewer utilities, while natural gas, electric, and telecommunications are provided by private companies. Water is contracted and managed by Inframark. As is becoming more common, McAlester out sources their solid waste management, although they still maintain one landfill. City utilities are managed by the Utilities Department; the Utility Maintenance branch of this department is responsible for maintaining approximately 170 miles of water line and 143 miles of sanitary sewer line. The crews of this branch are responsible for repair and maintenance of water, sewer, and storm lines around the City. The Utility Department provides the following services for the City of McAlester's residents:

- Repair of water line breaks on public properties
- Relocation of water meters and service lines
- Investigation of low water pressure
- Fire hydrant repair, replacement, and preventive maintenance
- Investigation of sanitary sewer odors
- Smoke testing and removal of sanitary sewer blockages and overflows
- Cleaning and repairing of sanitary sewer lines
- Restoration of public and private property after repair of water and sewer lines
- Installation of new city water meters
- Locating city water and sewer lines for Oklahoma One Call System

These systems are not in the best of condition, as discussed previously in the Transportation section. This shortfall in funding has led to an aging infrastructure that will need significant effort to update. However, the City has recently passed a dedicated sales tax to fund infrastructure construction and maintenance and is also looking for additional means of funding for infrastructure projects. Along with these ongoing efforts, the City is also looking at other cost-saving measures, including possibilities for water recycling and re-use.

# WATER

Water lines across the City are aging and many need replacement. The City repairs an average of over 1,000 water line breaks annually. Many of the existing valves are stuck open, complicating the repair of these breaks. Many breaks are in areas that can't be easily isolated, whereby causing large sections of the City to be shut down to make required repairs. Water supply is a concern because of possible water quality issues with the same current water sources. Lake Eufaula and Coal Creek are being considered as possible additional water sources. Also, the current raw water pumps are in need of significant maintenance. Making the water supply issue more complicated is that McAlester currently supplies water to five rural water districts. On a more positive note, the current water treatment plant is in fair condition. The City is currently replacing water meters with electronic meters – a project expected to be complete within three years.



KEY
Water Lines

NORTH

WATER UTILITY MAP
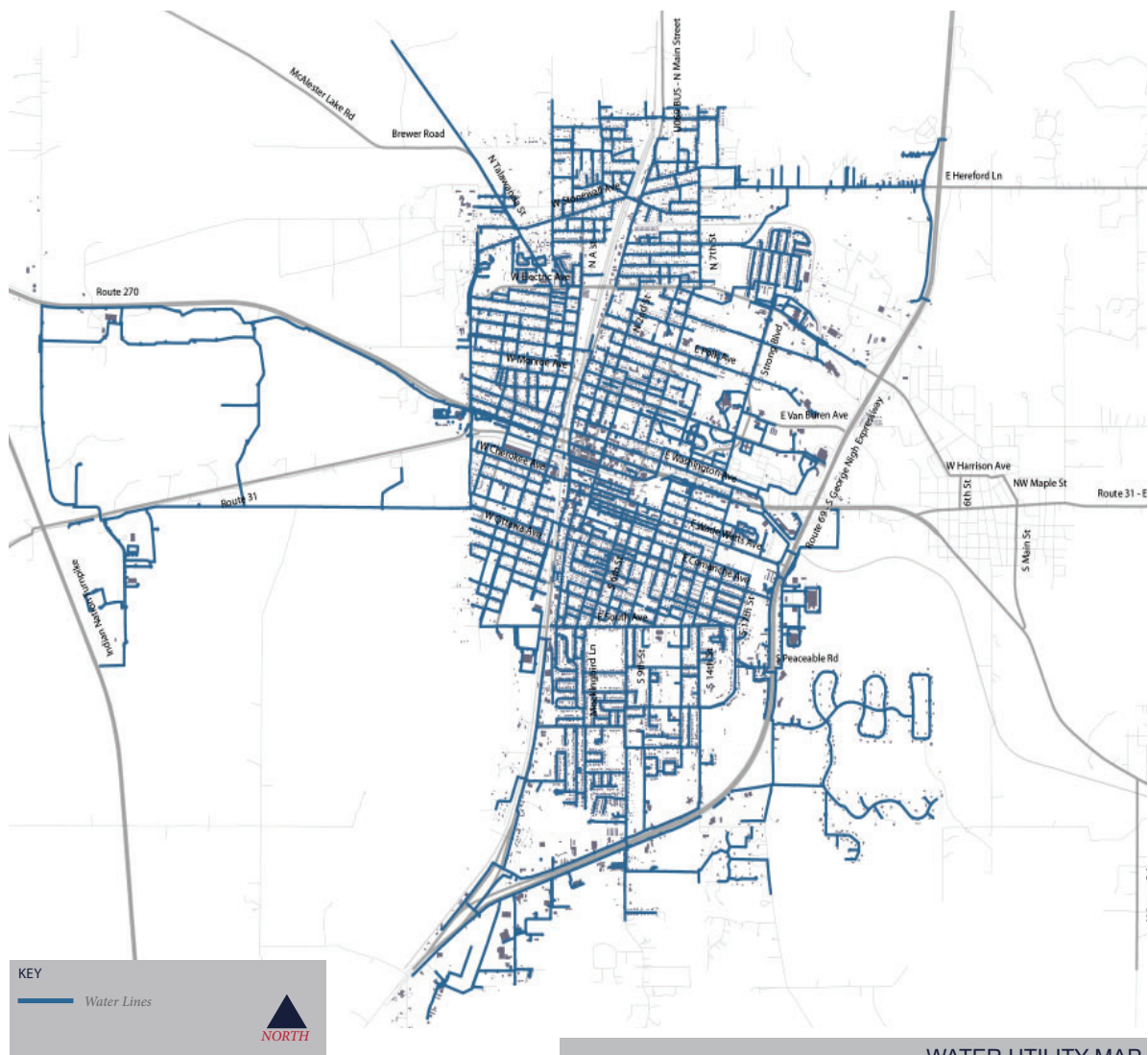
# WASTEWATER

Wastewater/sanitary sewer systems across the City are in similar, if not worse, condition to the water lines. The original clay tile pipes that comprise most of the system are deteriorating. This deterioration is causing high inflow from stormwater and high infiltration from groundwater into the sanitary sewer lines. As a result, the two wastewater treatment plants are only running at 85% capacity – the remaining 15% being consumed by the inflow/infiltration. The sanitary lift stations are in need of maintenance. Likewise, the two wastewater treatment plants are in poor condition and need extensive maintenance and updates.

# STORM

Storm drain lines are in better condition than the water and wastewater systems. There is a Stormwater Master Plan from 1972 now in place and improvements to the stormwater system are proceeding in accordance with that Master Plan. McAlester has a new Stormwater Master Plan prepared in 2019 that is pending approval by City Council.



**KEY**

— Sanitary Sewer Lines

NORTH

SANITARY SEWER UTILITY MAP

**Most Common Used House Heating Fuel:**



- Utility Gas: 58%
- Electricity: 40%
- Bottled, Tank, or LP Gas: 2%
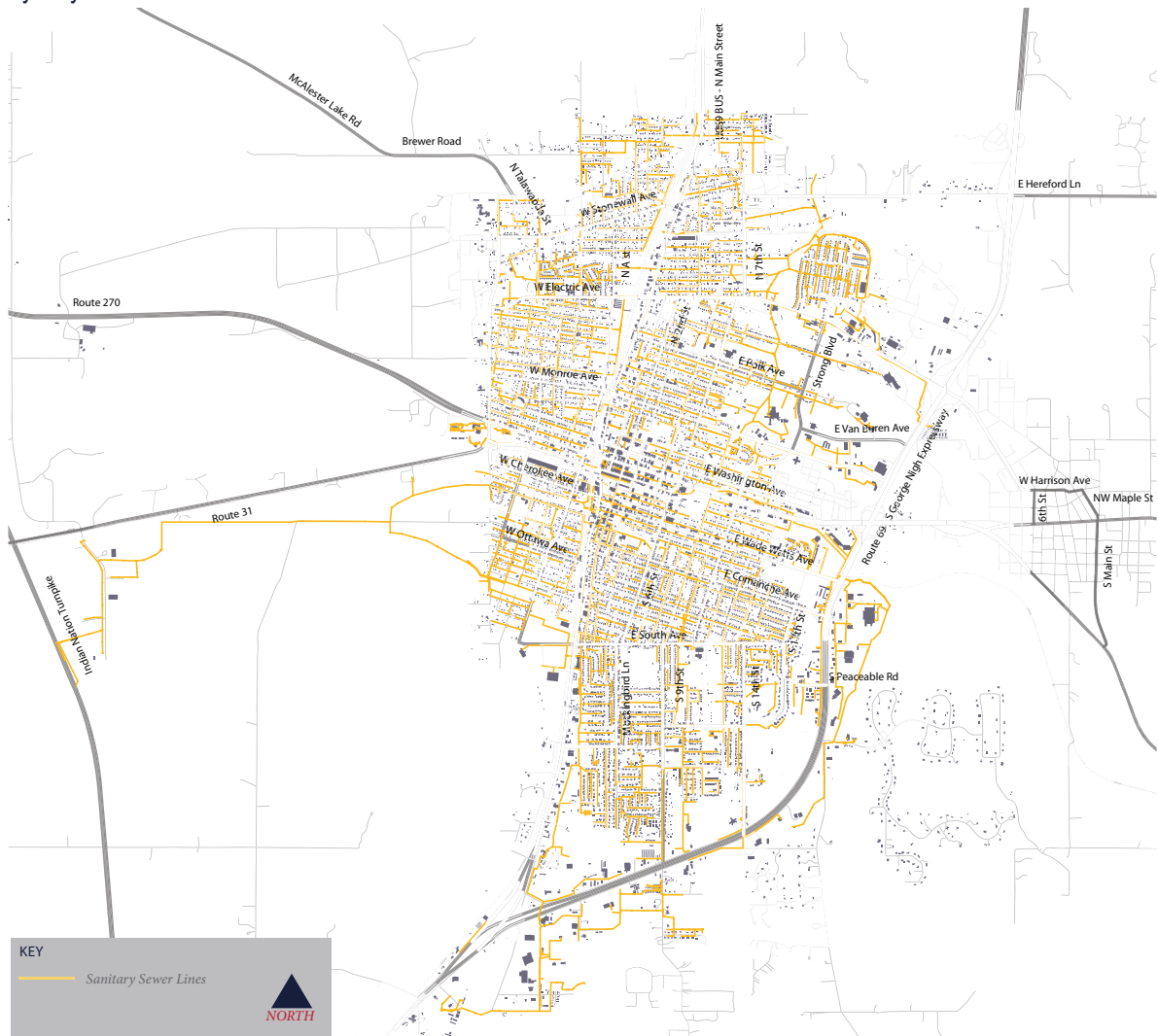
# NATURAL GAS

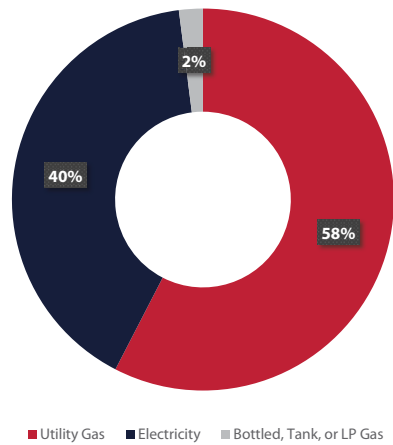Natural gas service is provided by CenterPoint Energy. They report that approximately 80% of their infrastructure has been modernized to plastic pipes, which reduce leaks and increase reliability. They report no issues with capacity.

# ELECTRIC

Electric service in McAlester is currently provided by Public Service Company of Oklahoma (PSO). They report that all electric lines in McAlester are in good shape. Almost all these lines are above ground. PSO reports that they have ample capacity to meet additional load to service new developments and residents.

# TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Currently the primary internet provider in McAlester is AT&T, though some minor companies, such as Viasat, Windstream, and Vyve Broadband, are beginning to be available to residents and businesses. Most internet availability is through DSL/Cable systems. AT&T is moving from copper to fiber-optic lines. Currently, for many residents and businesses, DSL and wireless services are not reliable, and speeds are slow, with 3 Mbps to 10 Mbps common. Many businesses that operate on 'cloud-based' systems suffer from frequent interruptions. Residents have complained that their internet services go down when their children come home from school. As a result of all these issues, it is readily apparent that internet and telecommunications services in McAlester are not adequate to meet the current demand.

# SOLID WASTE

Solid waste services are currently being outsourced and the city-owned landfill is only open 8:00am - noon on the second Saturday of every month. Other landfill sites are available, but these are privately held and charge fees, typically $60 to $70 per load, to dump. McAlester had six weekend cleanup events over the course of last year; over one million pounds of bulk trash were collected during these events. These events are the only opportunity for most residents to dispose of hazardous materials. Additional solid waste services would be beneficial to the City and its residents.

# BRIDGE IMPROVEMENTS

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) has recently selected a bridge consultant to perform preliminary engineering for three bridges in McAlester including:

• Carl Albert Parkway over the Union Pacific Railroad
• Carl Albert Parkway over the Arkansas-Oklahoma Railroad and 9th Street
• Carl Albert Parkway over the Arkansas-Oklahoma Railroad and 16th Street/Washington Avenue

It is recommended McAlester coordinate with ODOT concerning temporary traffic control which may involve city streets.

# PLANNING FOR THE U.S. HIGHWAY NO. 69 CORRIDOR RECONFIGURATION

The Oklahoma Department of Transportation has recently completed construction of the first phase of a two-phase reconfiguration of U.S. 69, a major north-south transportation corridor to/from and through the City of McAlester.

Phase 1 construction included:

• Extends from Peaceable Road northward to East Wade Watts Avenue (approximately 0.65 miles)
• Widen the Wade Watts overpass from four to six lanes
• Alter the East and West frontage roads for conversion of two-way traffic to one-way traffic in Phase 2.

Phase 2, similar in nature and now under design, connects to the south end of Phase 1 and extends to a point approximately ¼ mile north of South 14th Street near the south end of the McAlester Country Club. This project is slated to be bid in Fiscal Year 2019, with construction beginning early in Calendar Year 2020 (after the holidays, as requested by the City.) Although detailed plans are not finalized, the planned project improvements feature:

• Complete the construction necessary for full conversion of the East and West frontage roads to two-lane, one-way traffic within the extents of both Phase 1 and Phase 2 projects
• Construction of on and off-ramps from US-69 to the frontage roads north of South 14th Street
• Construction of an overpass on U.S. 69 with a cross-over, Texas turnarounds, and a connecting roadway to Peaceable Road. The overpass is located approximately 900 feet south of the intersection of Kinkead Road and Peaceable Road

Although there is nothing in ODOT's Eight-Year Work Plan for additional phases of improvements along U.S. 69, it is logical to presume that improvements similar in nature to Phases 1 and 2 will be constructed in the future. These future phases will extend from the south end of Phase 2 to the interchange of U.S. 69 and Business 69B, as this is anticipated to be a future growth area for McAlester. It is recommended McAlester engage a transportation planner to develop a Transportation Master Plan in coordination with ODOT for this corridor. This master plan would prove a useful and invaluable tool for the City and developers alike for preserving future right-of-way and controlling access to the frontage roads. A major issue that could be addressed is a recommendation to ODOT for the location of a future interchange.

For interim development measures, signal coordination and timing is essential per ODOT's Division Engineer. Signals are to be interconnected and timed so that semi-trailer traffic is allowed to flow freely through consecutive signals once relieved of a stop condition by a green light; i.e. avoid short, repetitive stops. This will greatly facilitate the flow of passenger vehicle traffic as well. At grade intersections will require modification to accommodate new development, with the elimination of conflicting turning movements at frontage road connections.
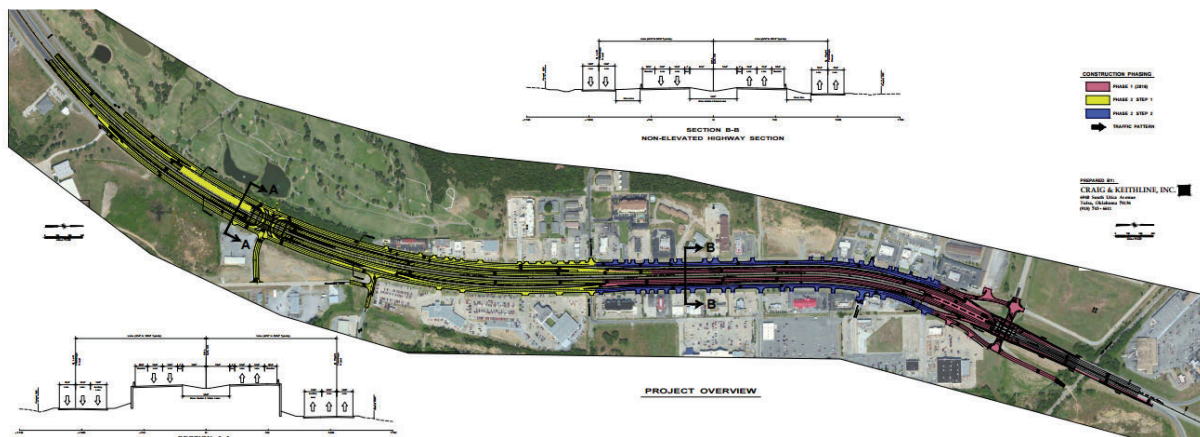


ODOT HIGHWAY 69 CORRIDOR PLAN
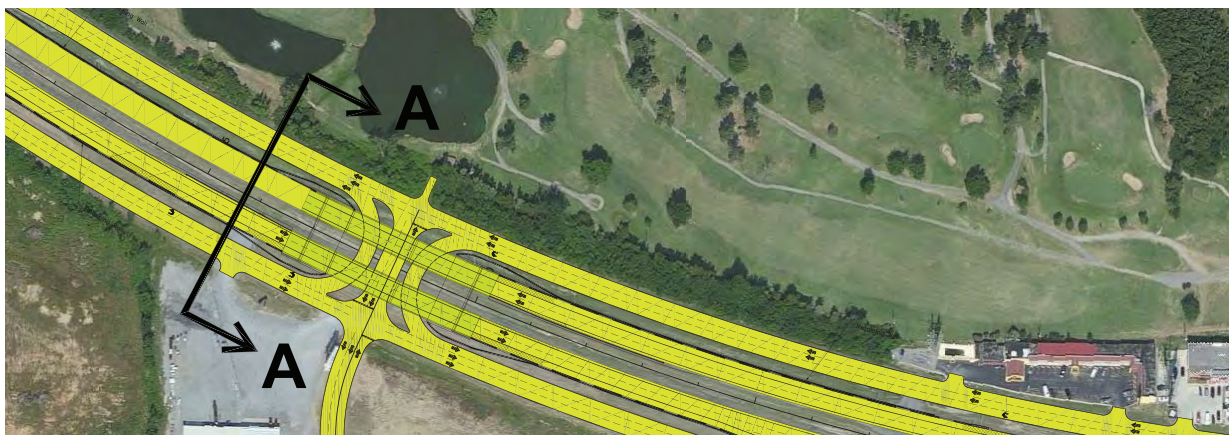


ODOT SECTION A ENLARGEMENT

# 8 COMMUNITY FACILITIES + SERVICES

The City of McAlester is governed by a Mayor-Council form of government with one mayor and six council members, each of whom resides in a different ward. The governmental structure consists of 12 departments and 23 boards and commissions that assist with the functionality and accountability of the city government. While many facilities and services, such as parks and recreation, utilities, and street maintenance, are city responsibilities, others are provided by or in partnership with other organizations and each have a bearing on the quality of life and development pattern of the City.

> **"SIZES OF LIBRARIES HAVE INCREASED OVER THE LAST TWENTY YEARS DUE TO TECHNOLOGY, THE LIBRARY AS A PLACE, AND LARGER CHILDREN'S ROOMS AND HOMEWORK CENTERS..."**
>
> --Planning the Modern Public Library

## LIBRARY

The McAlester Public Library is a part of the Southeastern Public Library Regional System of Oklahoma. The downtown location is currently the only public library in McAlester and is a part of the regional system. The 13,000-square-foot facility is equipped with computers, a kitchen, and meeting rooms. While it functions as a traditional library with books and print and digital resources, it also serves as a community center. The full-time staff relies on part-time staff and volunteers to deliver community programs and services to people within the McAlester regional area, including:

- Programs, including summer programs with many theme-based activities and visiting performers and artists, serving all ages infants to seniors. Teen programs, Lap Sit/Story Time, Crafts, Movies, STEM Adventures for grades 3-12.
- Services – Tax return preparation; printing, faxing, and scanning; education (e.g., health literacy, ESL High School Equivalency, technology, and financial fitness); and computer access. Friends of the Library is a partner in providing program funding

Other regular group activities that take place at the library include book clubs, cooking classes, craft workshops, fitness classes, movies, chess club, and meetings of area organizations (like the Literacy Council).



The McAlester Regional Literacy Council is the only literacy council in southeastern Oklahoma and is housed at the McAlester Public Library. During the summer, the Library serves lunch to area youth aged 0 to 18 through a federally funded program.

*The McAlester Public Library, which is housed in this building two blocks north of downtown, functions as a community center, serving people of all ages from across the city and the region. A variety of programs are offered during the year.*

McAlester Library Stats:
- 60,516 books checked out
- 32,352 audiobooks and DVDs checked out
- 54,360 digital checkouts
- 38,596 program attendees
- 131,508 visitors to the library
- 195,160 computer use with a library card
- 14,943 library card holders

Meetings with City Staff and community leaders were conducted to gather information on recent public service planning efforts. Information gathered at these meetings identified the following:

1. Currently very little access to mental health care in McAlester.
2. Many residents want to see more recreation opportunities.
3. McAlester needs more programming for elderly citizens.
4. State budgets and staff reduced – having an impact on healthcare in McAlester.
5. Most crimes in McAlester are property crimes. This falls in the middle with the rest of like size communities in Oklahoma.
6. Response times for fire and police very short. System dispatched through 911 and response times are adequate.
7. Create forums to help strengthen relationships between McAlester's residents and emergency responders.
8. Development design should support walkability and healthier, active lifestyles.

McAlester has an adequate number of Public Safety facilities to serve the community. The Public Safety leadership had no issue with accommodating their required responses in the appropriate response time.

**CITY OF MCALESTER DEPARTMENTS**
- **CITY CLERK**
- **CITY MANAGER**
- **COMMUNITY SERVICES**
- **FINANCE**
- **FIRE**
- **HUMAN RESOURCES**
- **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**
- **MUNICIPAL COURT**
- **COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- **POLICE**
- **PUBLIC WORKS**
- **UTILITIES**

**Did you know?**

**Most new libraries are designed for one square foot per person served.**

# EDUCATION

The McAlester Public School (MPS) system serves the majority of students in the McAlester area. According to the MPS website, almost 900 students are enrolled annually and approximately 45 teachers are employed. The 2018 U.S. News & World Report High School Rankings rated 81% of McAlester High School students as being proficient in mathematics and reading. The high school dropout rate is 19.6%, which is more than double the state's rate of 9.2%.

The following is the breakdown of the MPS school system.

- High School (grades 9-12) - McAlester High School
- Middle School (grades 7-8) - Puterbaugh Middle School
- Immediate Center (grades 5-6) - Parker Intermediate Center
- Elementary (grades 1-4) :
  - William Rogers Elementary School
  - Emerson Elementary School
  - Edmond Doyle Elementary School
- Early Childhood Centers:
  - William Gay ECC (Pre-K and Kindergarten)
  - Jefferson ECC (Pre-K)
  - Washington – Headstart – (Kindergarten)

Two private schools, Lakewood Christian School and McAlester Christian Academy, are two options outside of the public school offerings.

Higher Education: Eastern Oklahoma State College (EOSC) and Kiamichi Technology Center (KTC)

# PUBLIC SAFETY

The McAlester Police Department is located in downtown McAlester and employs 45 full-time sworn officers. Sworn personnel include one chief, one deputy chief, one community services officer/school resource officer, 5 criminal investigation/narcotics, and 37 uniformed patrol officers. The Police Department also hosts the E-911 call center for all police, fire and EMS emergencies.

The Pittsburg County Sheriff's Office is located on N. West Avenue, North of Electric. The Sheriff's Office currently consists of one sheriff, multiple deputies, and many administrative staff members.

The McAlester Fire Department has four locations spread out around the city limits of McAlester and are listed below. The Fire Department currently employs 43 full-time employees with one fire chief, one assistant fire chief, one fire marshal, one administrative assistant, and 39 line personnel.

- McAlester Fire Emergency Response Complex
- McAlester Fire Department South Station #2
- McAlester Fire Department North Station #3
- McAlester Fire Department City Hall Station #4

The EMS ground ambulance service needs in the City of McAlester are provided by the McAlester Fire/EMS Department.

**KEY**

**Safety Services:**

● Police Department and Sheriff's Department

● McAlester Fire Department Central, Station 2, Station 3, and Emergency Response Center

‑ ‑ ‑ 1 Mile Walk from designated Facility

● **Schools**: High School, Middle School, Intermediate Center, Elementary Schools, and Early Childhood Centers

● **Higher Education**: EOSC and KTC

● **Library**

*COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES MAP*
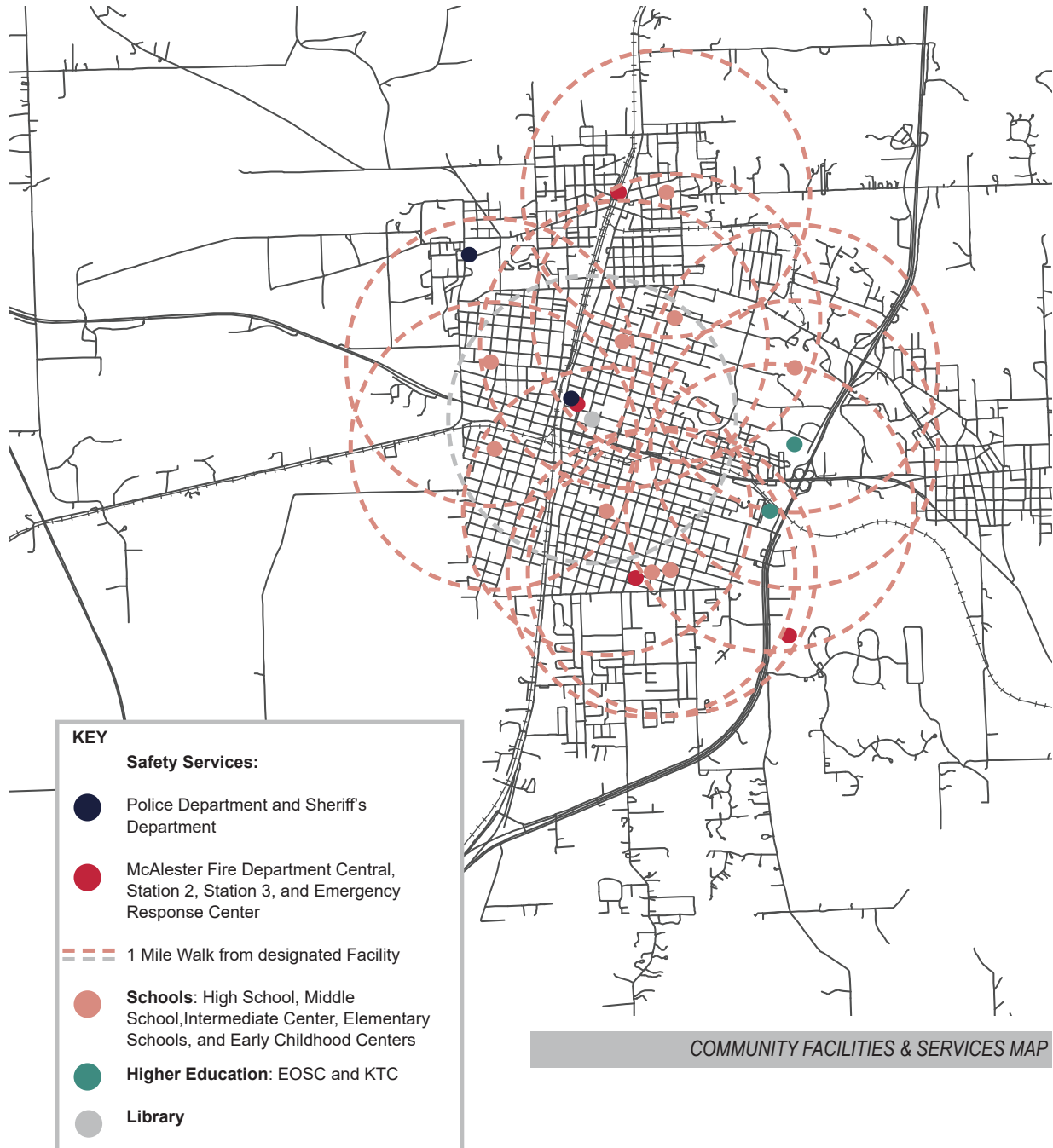
# COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GAP

Police and Fire accomidate the services needed for existing and future growth of the City. The Library is located at the heart of the City - reaching the most people within a 1 mile walk. Areas not served by the library, within a mile walk, include the residence south of South Ave, north of Electric, and east of Strong Boulevard. School coverage is adequate for the current population, but is limited where Main St & George Nigh Hwy intersect. School expansion may be needed with population growth to the south and as needed with the current school capacities with the new population growth.

# 9 COMMUNITY HEALTH

County Health Rankings and Roadmaps assesses counties across the U.S. in terms of health outcomes and health factors. According to the 2018 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, Pittsburg County is ranked 63rd for health outcomes and 52nd for health factors out of 77 counties in Oklahoma. Since most of the county's population resides in McAlester, the issues the county is facing are issues the City is facing as well.  Planning for the future cannot resolve all health issues; however, planning provides the City an opportunity to assess the conditions of the City and address the some of the factors that could be negatively affecting the health of the community and, over time, realize some improvements in health outcomes, such as heart disease and suicide deaths. The following summarizes the factors that are problematic for Pittsburg County.

Health Behaviors – Poor diet and the lack of physical activity are two major behavioral issues that are contributing to high rates of cardiovascular disease and the rise in obesity. By facilitating better access to nutritious food and facilities for exercise, promoting development design that supports active living, and defining locations for programs (exercise, community gardening, health education, etc.), the City can play a key role in lowering the obesity rate.

Clinical Care – The ratio of healthcare professionals to the population is relatively low compared to the US. Attracting talent to the community requires proactive measures to improve the quality of life. Quality neighborhoods, housing choice, amenities, and schools are among the factors that influence location decisions. In planning for the future, the City can work with the private developers, schools, and other partners to address these factors and ensure McAlester is a competitive location in recruiting healthcare professionals to the City.

Social and Economic Factors – Relatively high unemployment and lower-than-average income levels are two more issues that can affect the health and well-being of the citizenry. According to County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, as income increases or decreases, so does health. As the results of the second community survey revealed, 56% of respondents recognize the connection between wages and health. Specifically, income and job security affects perceptions of healthcare access and affordability. Social connections are also an important aspect to maintaining good physical and mental health.  As noted in What Works? Social and Economic Opportunities to Improve Health for All, "people with greater social support, less isolation, and greater interpersonal trust live longer and healthier lives than those who are socially isolated. Neighborhoods richer in social connections provide residents with greater access to support and resources than those that are

less tightly knit." Through the planning process as well as the resulting plan, the City can promote community engagement and adopt policies for development design—and programming—that brings people together and fosters a sense of belonging and community pride.

Physical Environment – The natural and built environment can have an impact on the health of the community. As noted above, obesity is also an issue in the county, and this is likely symptomatic of a built environment that is not conducive to physical activity and active transportation. Planning provides an opportunity to establish policies that address development form, creating an environment in which the development form supports walking and biking and minimizes the urban footprint, thereby, conserving natural vegetation that helps to maintain air and water quality. Less dependence on the automobile also helps reduce emissions, another contributing factor in poor air quality.

| FACTOR | PITTSBURG COUNTY | STATE OF OKLAHOMA | U.S. TOPP PERFORMERS |
|---|---|---|---|
| Obesity | 34% | 33% | 26% |
| Physical inactivity | 34% | 30% | 20% |
| Access to exercise | 77% | 74% | 91% |
| Limited access to healthy foods | 16% | 9% | 2% |
| Primary care physicians | 1540:1 | 1590:1 | 1030:1 |
| Social associations | 12.3 | 11.5 | 22.1 |
| Unemployment | 6.3% | 4.9% | 3.2% |
| Median household income | $44,500 | $49,200 | $65,100 |
| Air pollution - particulate matter | 9.4 | 9.2 | 6.7 |

Source: County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2018

**Did you know?**

**Pittsburg County has had a 6% increase in obesity between 2017 and 2018.**
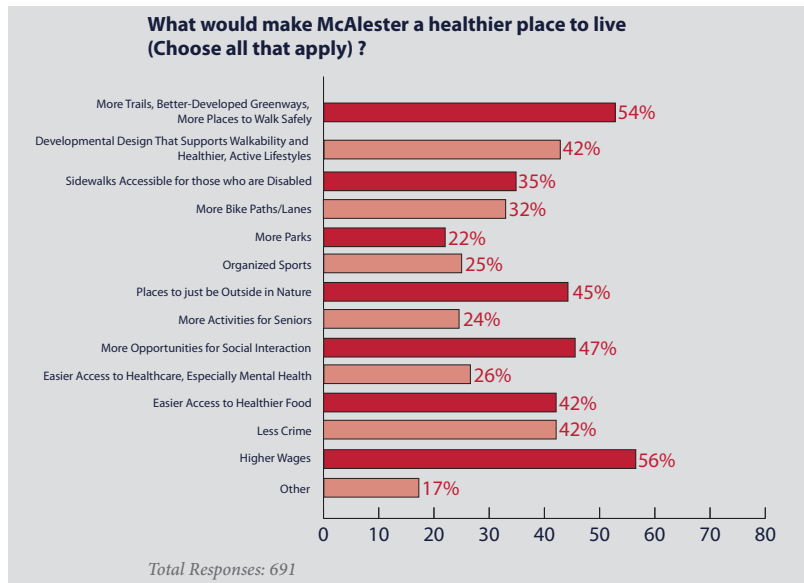
**56%**

of survey respondents said that McAlester needs higher wages to make McAlester a healthier place to live.

**What would make McAlester a healthier place to live (Choose all that apply) ?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More Trails, Better-Developed Greenways, More Places to Walk Safely | 54% |
| Developmental Design That Supports Walkability and Healthier, Active Lifestyles | 42% |
| Sidewalks Accessible for those who are Disabled | 35% |
| More Bike Paths/Lanes | 32% |
| More Parks | 22% |
| Organized Sports | 25% |
| Places to just be Outside in Nature | 45% |
| More Activities for Seniors | 24% |
| More Opportunities for Social Interaction | 47% |
| Easier Access to Healthcare, Especially Mental Health | 26% |
| Easier Access to Healthier Food | 42% |
| Less Crime | 42% |
| Higher Wages | 56% |
| Other | 17% |

*Total Responses: 691*

**"AS INCOME INCREASES OR DECREASES, SO DOES HEALTH. EMPLOYMENT PROVIDES INCOME THAT SHAPES CHOICES ABOUT HOUSING, EDUCATION, CHILD CARE, FOOD, MEDICAL CARE, AND MORE."**

–What Works? Social and Economic Opportunities to Improve Health for All, County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2018

# 3 | <span style="color:red">THE VISION</span>

## MOVING MCALESTER FORWARD

Through the planning process, the community articulated a vision for the future of the City. This vision, is supported by the "Goals" presented on the pages that follow, serve as general guidance for city leaders as they manage change for the benefit of the community.

The City will continue to grow from within, enhancing urbanized areas with improved parks, roads, utilities, and civic buildings and spaces.

Downtown will become a vibrant regional destination while maintaining desirable characteristics, which appeal to visitors and residents.

Employment is experiencing growth and diversity in industry and entrepreneurship, spurred by higher education. Increased job opportunities, expanded housing choices, and development that supports healthy living improves the quality of life for existing and future residents.

Walkable neighborhoods are connected by a system of trails to shopping, dining, parks, amenities, and activities for all ages.

Open space preserves and protects the integrity of the area's natural resources.

# GOALS

**Moving McAlester Forward** is an update to the City's comprehensive plan adopted in 2006. The goals presented in the earlier plan were brought forward. When surveyed, citizens indicated that the goals, to varying degrees, are still relevant today.

- Ensure economic development will enhance and enrich the quality of life in McAlester
- Plan for and provide public utilities that adequately serve the population; allow for growth; promote and attract economic development; and encourage efficient use of land and fiscal resources
- Develop a central business district which financially benefits the citizens of McAlester and the surrounding trade area
- Implement the comprehensive plan as a working document to guide the future growth and development of McAlester
- Evaluate housing in all residential areas and establish a method to ensure a variety of types that are safe, healthy, served by all public utilities, and have appropriate connectivity to public facilities, schools, and commercial areas
- Provide a framework for sustainable community development to ensure proper growth management
- Provide well-designed and maintained transportation in McAlester, which ensures safety and ease of movement for all residents
- Provide a complete range of public services to the community
- Provide land area, facilities, and activities to service the recreation needs of McAlester
- Provide sufficient land area and facilities to serve the education and cultural needs of all persons in the community and assure that facilities are conveniently accessible

**"IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE – THROUGH MORE SHOPPING & ENTERTAINMENT CHOICES."**

-McAlester Citizen
(Public Response to the Public Meeting No. 1)

# FUTURE LAND USE

Going forward, McAlester will focus on the existing developed area, particularly downtown, and the quality of places and experiences within the City.

Three possible directions for future growth and development were prepared in response to community input (refer to Appendix), and the resulting Future Land Use vision blends aspects of all three.

The vision is aspirational, and it reflects the community's goals. For example, the citizenry has expressed a desire for walkable, mixed-use development. Concentrating future development in downtown helps create an environment where many people living and working in McAlester can walk to shopping, dining, and services. With cultural and recreational opportunities integrated into the development pattern, social connections are fostered. Also, by directing future development to the center of McAlester, existing infrastructure capacity can be utilized, which is another goal. The community is also committed to conserving valuable natural resources. The map delineates areas where such assets exist and should therefore be the subject of future conservation efforts. The map supports policies for lower density development near such assets and the use of conservation design to ensure minimal impacts to such resources.

The Future Land Use Map (Figure 13) graphically depicts the community's vision for the future of McAlester. The map is meant to provide a framework for future land use decisions, and as such, support written policies and provide additional guidance with respect to the provision of services, the prioritization of capital investments, and the application of land development regulations. It indicates the preferred locations for future development as well as the type and intensity of such development. Place Types are the land use classifications, which are described in the section that follows, specify the predominant use; however, development may also be comprised with other compatible uses.
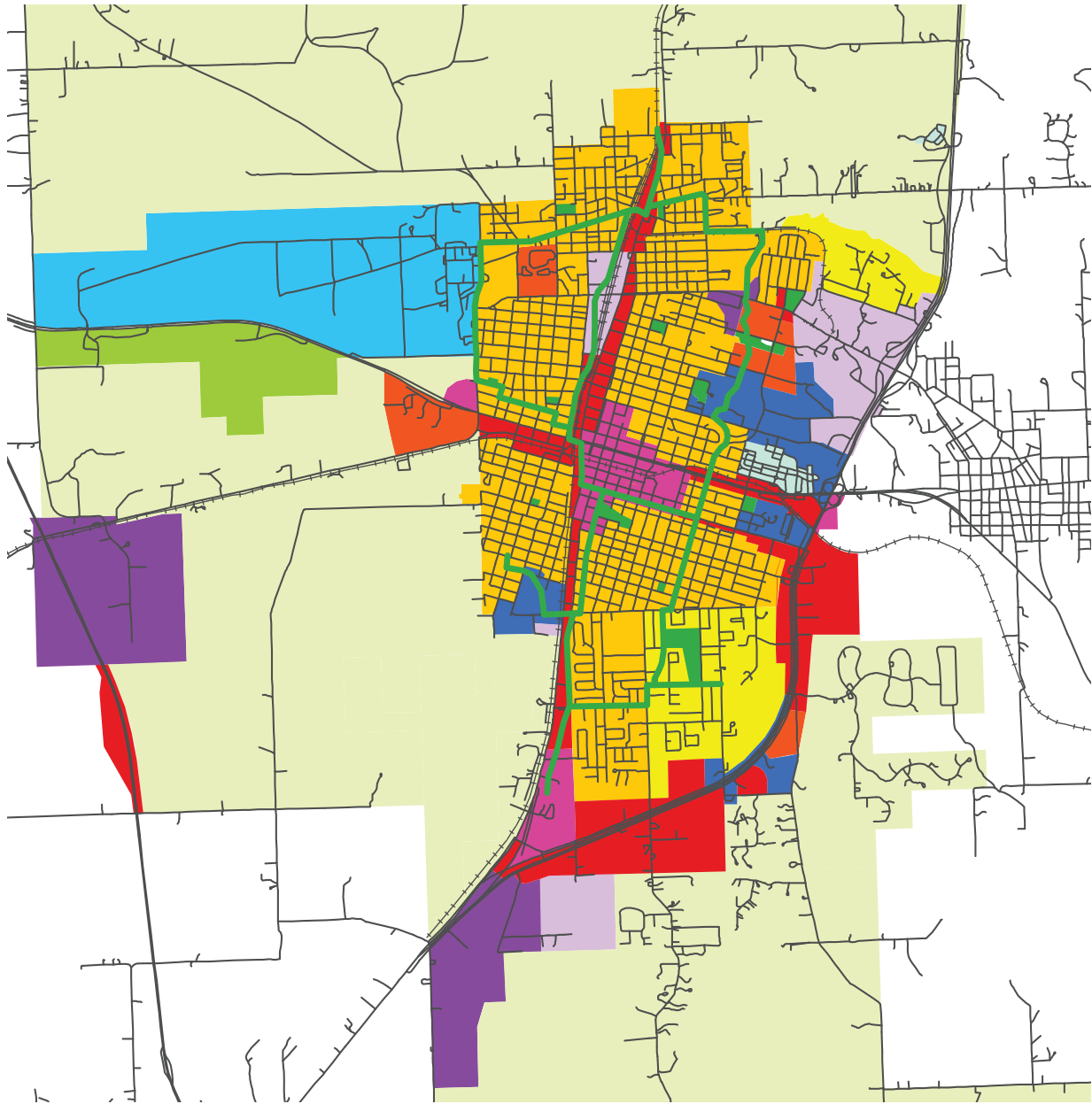
FIGURE 13: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

| | Cemetery | | Employment-Institutional | | Mixed-Use |
| | Commercial | | Institutional (Prison) | | Recreation Open Space |
| | Conservation Space | | Low Density Residential | | Regional Recreation |
| | Employment- Light Industrial | | Medium Density Residential | | |
| | Employment- Heavy Industrial | | Multifamily Residential | | |

# FUTURE LAND USE - GENERAL FRAMEWORK

This section of the Land Use Plan describes the City's General Framework Map, which should direct growth policy, infrastructure investments and improvements, redevelopment initiatives, and open space prioritization. McAlester's framework revolves around the city's center, the downtown, and grows outward. The downtown area should be focused and centralized, with development, redevelopment and infill being concentrated in this area first. Growth should then radiate outwardly within the areas already developed. The outward, relatively undeveloped areas around the current footprint should be focused on conservation, specifically of green space and natural features that already exist, and strive to maintain low density development.



**163**
of survey respondents said that McAlester needs better shopping and store options.

The top items suggested by the public for improving Downtown were to enhance or add more businesses, improve streets, and add more parking.
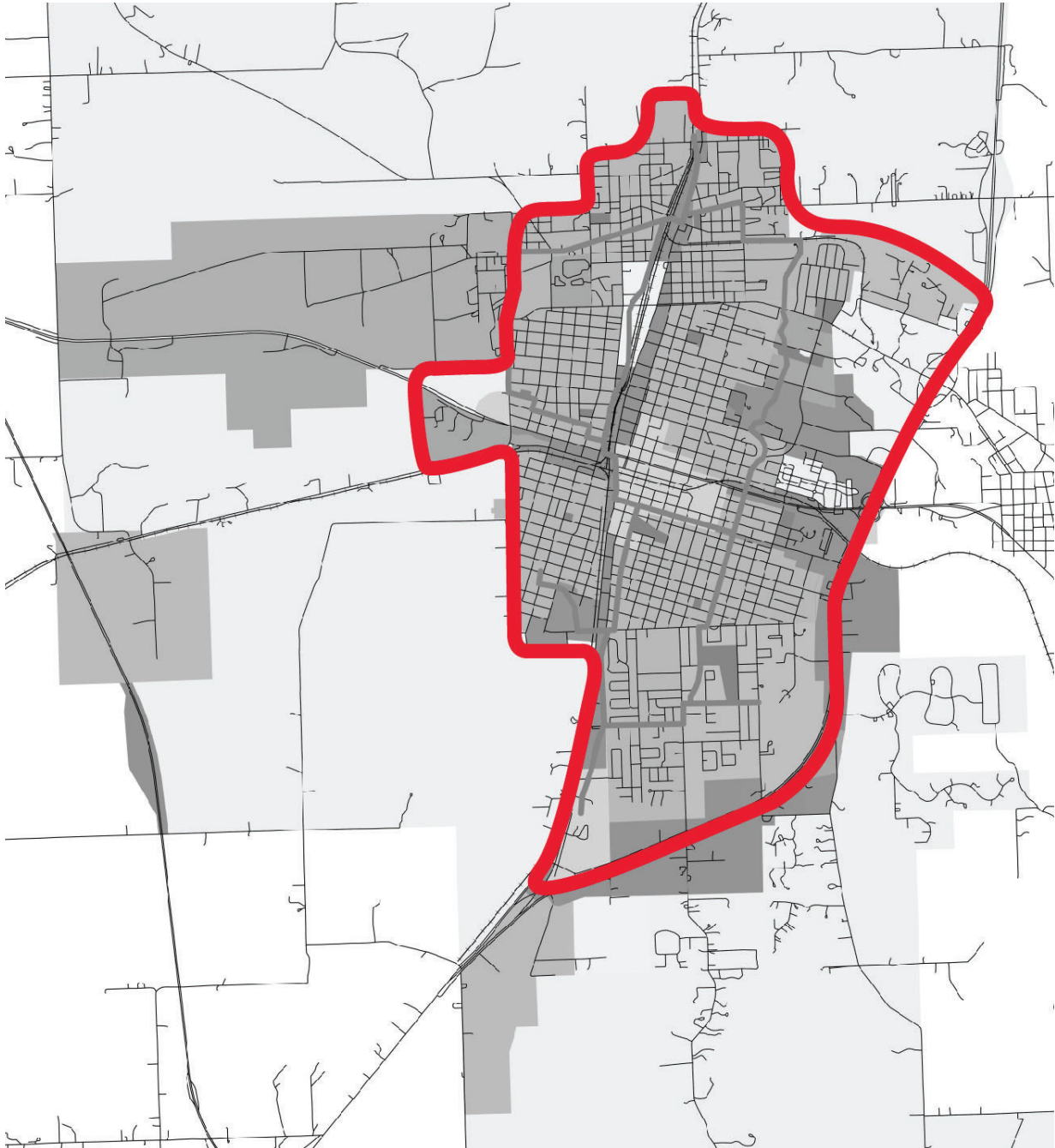
GENERAL FRAMEWORK MAP

# FUTURE LAND USE - DECONSTRUCTED





Commercial
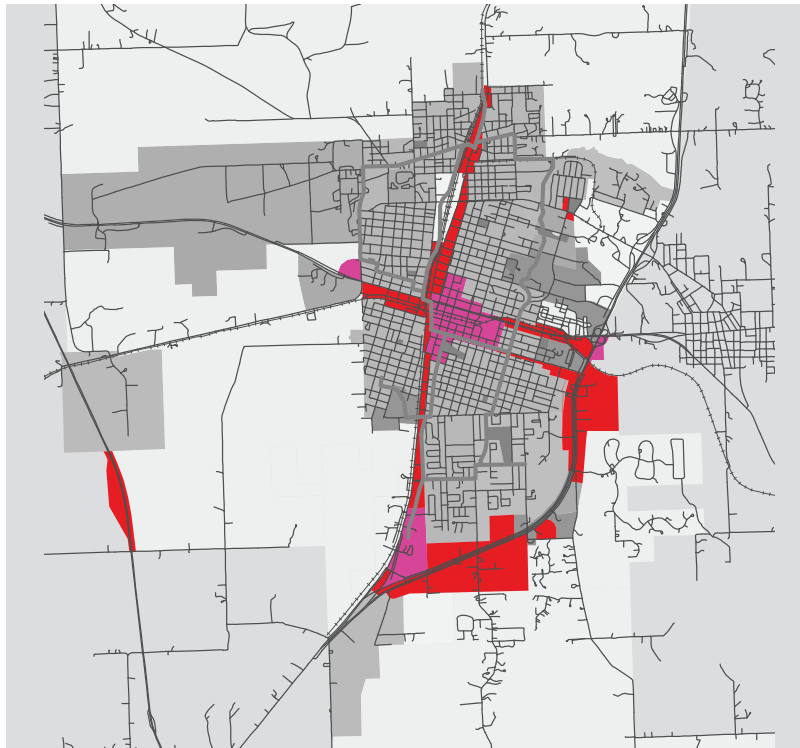
Mixed-Use

## MIXED-USE + COMMERCIAL

- Mixed-use development with jobs, shopping, dining, and amenities and civic anchors
- Satisfy current residents' needs
- Attract young entrepreneurs as well as tourists, which is key for economic development
- Gateways – introduce city, communicate image/identity.
- Many uses in close proximity is conducive to walking and biking – supports "active transportation," a healthier option and part of an active lifestyle
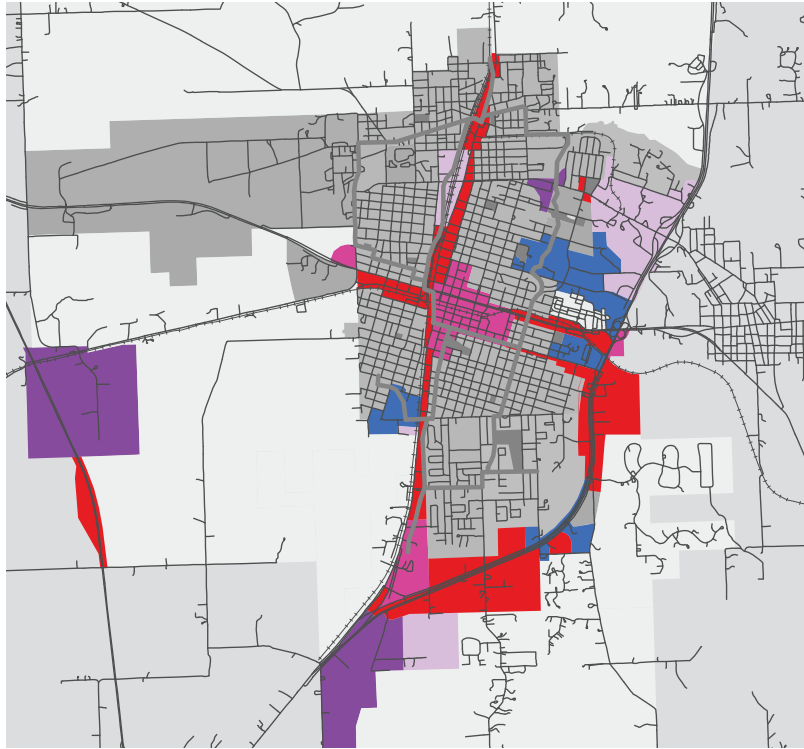
Employment - Light Industrial
Employment - Heavy Industrial
Employment - Institutional
Commercial
Mixed-Use

## EMPLOYMENT

- Opportunities to build out existing centers and parks
- Supporting commercial development allowed
- Amenities integrated within
- Make these employment locations more appealing to workers
- This equates to a more attractive business location for employers to consider, and ultimately helps these locations become more competitive in the region
- Consistent with design principles for healthy workplaces
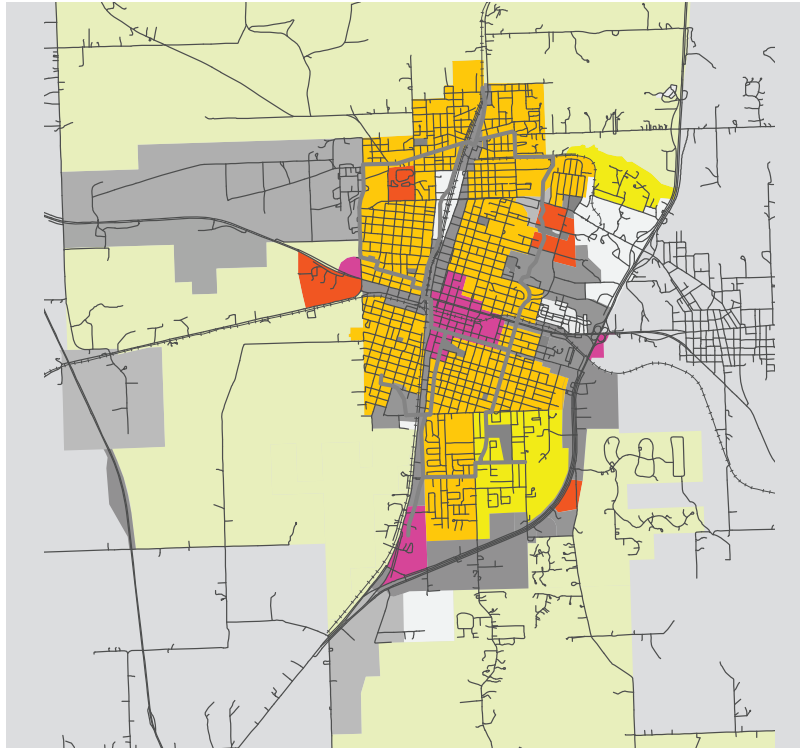
Low Density Residential

Medium Density Residential

Multifamily Residential

Conservation

Mixed-Use

## RESISTENTIAL

## RESIDENTIAL

- Locations for higher density residential development (new and infill)
  - Multigenerational – mixed residential neighborhood that provides options for an aging population, as seniors can "age in place"
  - Respects character of existing, established neighborhoods
  - Close to work
- Variety
  - Affordable options to increase home ownership
  - Responds to lifestyle preferences
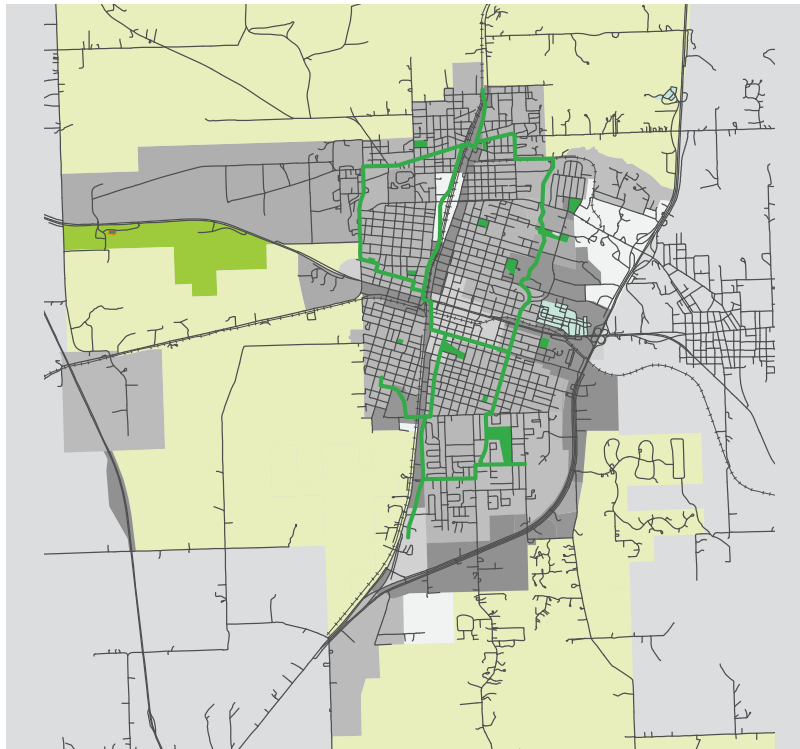
Recreation Open Space

Regional Recreation

Conservation

Cemetery

## PARKS, RECREATION + OPEN SPACE

- Enhance neighborhoods and employment centers with increased access to natural and improved open space amenities. Areas around historic and cultural assets preserved. Link cultural destinations, historic assets, etc

- Natural resource conservation maintains water quality, habitats, etc. and raises awareness and appreciation

- Fosters a healthy living environment. Conservation areas outside of "served" area allows limited amount of development in which open space is a primary component

- Encroachment into agricultural at the periphery is avoided

- Existing facilities are the focus of near-term investments. Programmable spaces

- Connected system of parks and open space. Active and passive. Trails for recreation and transportation

# PLACE TYPES

Land classifications, which are displayed on the Future Land Use + Conservation map, are referred to as Place Types. In addition to indicating the predominant use, they specify supporting, compatible uses; the desired intensity of development; and distinguishing features that further define the character of the place, such as scale, connectivity, and open space.

## REGIONAL RECREATION

This type of area is the location of a range of facilities design to support a range of programmed events. Ballfields for organized leagues and the Expo Center are among the uses included in this type of area. Drawing visitors from around the region and the state, this type of area is located along a major highway and away from residential neighborhoods to manage and mitigate the impacts of traffic and noise.

## MULTIFAMLY RESIDENTIAL

This area is intended to accommodate a variety of age groups and lifestyle preferences. Attached single-family and Multifamily units are intended for areas where access to the transportation network is high and within short walking and biking distances of nearby shopping, employment, and services. Density ranges from 10 to 15 dwelling units per acre. Common open space is reasonably accessible, including public greens and parks, via sidewalks and greenways.

## RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACE

Various types of passive and active parks and other recreation facilities may be accommodated in all land use categories. Where depicted on the Future Land Use Map, Park areas may be developed as community-serving facilities, such as public greenways, nature preserves, and neighborhood or community parks that support a variety of activities (league sports, playgrounds, walking trails, splash pads, picnicking, etc.). Access via multiple modes (vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle) should be considered in the design of such facilities and each should be connected to adjacent development. Locations near concentrations of population and schools should be encouraged.

## LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This area is characterized by low- to moderate-density residential development (up to 4 dwelling units per acre). Single-family detached homes are complemented by natural areas as well as formal and informal open space amenities.

## CONSERVATION OPEN SPACE

This type of area encompasses lands in agricultural use as well as lands that are generally undeveloped. It contains some features that are among the most valued in the region, including natural drainage areas that are also wildlife corridors. As a component of the urbanized area, it conserves natural resources and offers opportunities for access to nature. On the outer edges of McAlester, this area is not currently served by public utilities. Here, the area is intended to remain predominantly rural with a mix of agricultural uses, supporting rural businesses, and homes on large lots. Conservation design provides an opportunity to conserve some of those features while integrating low-density residential development. Single family homes on lots that vary in size may be clustered in pockets and complemented by natural areas protected through conservation easements. Passive recreation facilities may be sensitively integrated into the landscape.
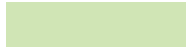
## MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

This area is comprised of single-family detached homes on small lots, duplexes, triplexes, quadraplexes, townhouses, and higher-end condominiums. The mix of housing types are intended to create neighborhoods with a moderate density range of 4 to 6 dwelling units per acre. Homes are minimally set back from local streets with sidewalks on both sides. Sidewalks and greenways connecting to downtown, schools, and mixed-use areas are key features of these neighborhoods, which are located in areas already served or easily served by infrastructure. Alleys provide access to garages and small parking areas. With smaller lots, private open space is minimal, so common open spaces are interspersed and may include neighborhood parks, natural areas, and other amenities.
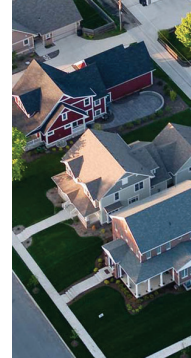
## EMPLOYMENT - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

These areas are intended to accommodate light industrial uses, offices, and multi-tenant flex space. This area promotes the concentration of employment-generating uses in areas with desirable access to the turnpike and State Highway 69. Expansions and new locations are supported with public infrastructure investments, and encroachment by new development is discouraged. Limitations on use and operations mitigate negative impacts, such as traffic congestion, noise, and light pollution, on existing residential development.



## INSTITUTIONAL (PRISION)

This area is devoted entirely to the Oklahoma State Penitentiary. It is a unique land use in the area, and the security isolates it from other development in the City. Therefore, it is delineated as a separate placetype.



## EMPLOYMENT - HEAVY INDUSTRIAL

These areas are intended to accommodate heavy industrial uses as well as supporting office and distribution/storage uses with convenient access to the turnpike and Highway 69. Expansions and new locations are supported with public infrastructure investments. Such uses are buffered from residential and other incompatible uses by distance and vegetative buffers, and encroachment by new development is discouraged.



## COMMERCIAL

These areas are comprised of local- and regional-serving retailers, restaurants, and service uses. Buildings are typically one and two stories. To better manage access and ensure visibility, such uses are concentrated at key intersections along major corridors. Parking is on site and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods is encouraged.



## MIXED-USE

These areas are intended to be centers of activity and destinations for residents, visitors, and workers. As live-work-shop environments, they include a mix of retail, restaurant, service, and office uses in addition to a variety of residential housing types. The mix of uses can be horizontal as well as vertical where a change in use can occur between floors of the same building. Buildings of two stories and above are common, and connected streets include short block lengths and pedestrian facilities. Access via the road network, sidewalks, greenways, and transit is feasible. In addition to off-street parking located to the sides and rears of buildings, on-street parking is also utilized. Shared parking, centralized public parking lots, and bicycle parking enhance accessibility. is also available. Open space is integrated in the form of plazas, formal greens, and greenway trails.
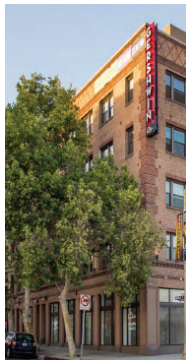


## EMPLOYMENT - INSTITUTIONAL

These areas include higher education, healthcare (i.e., hospital), other campus-style development, and large-scale civic and government uses. As significant components of the development pattern, these areas are typically key destinations in the City and can include community landmarks. Sites are designed and buildings are oriented to establish a positive relationship with and connections to adjacent development. Parking is located in large and small surface lots as well as along private and public streets to adequately serve multiple buildings. Facilities to support pedestrian and bicycle access are integrated, where appropriate. Small and moderately-sized schools and churches may be included within these areas; however, such uses are also appropriate in other land use categories.

# FOCUS AREAS

The evolution of the Planning Area will occur over a period of years. The development of some areas at the center of the City will likely spur positive change city-wide. Four focus areas (listed below) were identified and studied with the goal of drawing the City's attention to potential near-term initiatives and establishing a clear path forward. This part of the comprehensive planning process is essential to better understand development potential consistent with the future land use vision. Each set of conceptual illustrations on the pages that follow convey one of several possibilities. Considering the potential use of parcels collectively, decisions about future development on individual parcels can be made in a manner that optimizes the utilization of land while adhering to the community's goals and objectives.

**1** **DOWNTOWN:** THIS AREA IS THE HEART OF THE CITY. WITH IMPROVEMENTS MADE BY THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, IT WILL SERVE AS A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, WHICH CAN HAVE POSITIVE CITY-WIDE IMPACTS.

**2** **OLD TOWN:** OLD TOWN HAS HISTORIC ASSETS THAT MEMORIALIZE MCALESTER'S PAST. SENSITIVE INTEGRATION OF INFILL DEVELOPMENT WILL HELP PRESERVE THE CHARACTER OF PLACE THAT DEFINES MCALESTER.

**3** **MAIN STREET CONNECTION:** THE MAIN STREET CONNECTION IS A 1.5-MILE LINK BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND OLD TOWN. FUTURE INVESTMENT SHOULD RESTORE IT TO A VIABLE BUSINESS LOCATION.

**4** **WYANDOTTE AVENUE/ WADE WATTS AVENUE:** THE TRANSITION OF RESIDENTIAL USES TO NONRESIDENTIAL ALONG THE WYANDOTTE AVENUE/WADE WATTS AVENUE CORRIDOR OFFERS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE A MIXED-USE ZONE THAT SUPPORTS ALTERNATE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS.
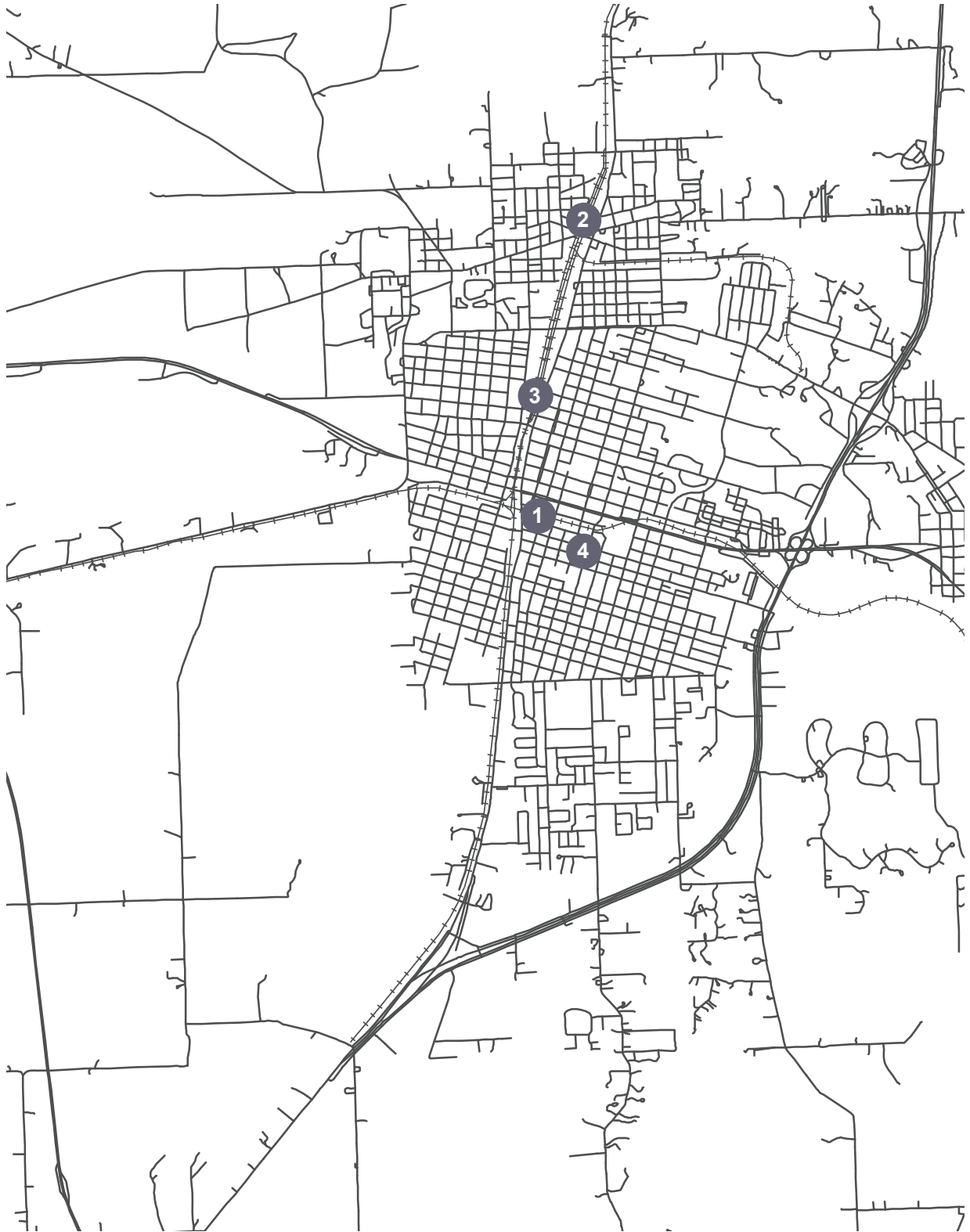
# FOCUS AREA 1 - DOWNTOWN

As the heart of the City, downtown should be the center of activity: a thriving business location; a focal point of civic life; a place to live; a place to shop, dine, be entertained; a place for the community to gather. As such, downtown McAlester has an opportunity to become a vibrant destination for residents as well as visitors from around the region. The streetscape improvements are underway and there is a range of mixed uses that are suitable for the area. By focusing on the specifics of downtown (the relationships between uses; how buildings address the public spaces, including existing and future parks and streets; the circulation pattern; and the programming of activities), the City can ensure that downtown, with improvements made by the public and private sectors, serves as a catalyst for economic growth, which can have positive city-wide impacts.
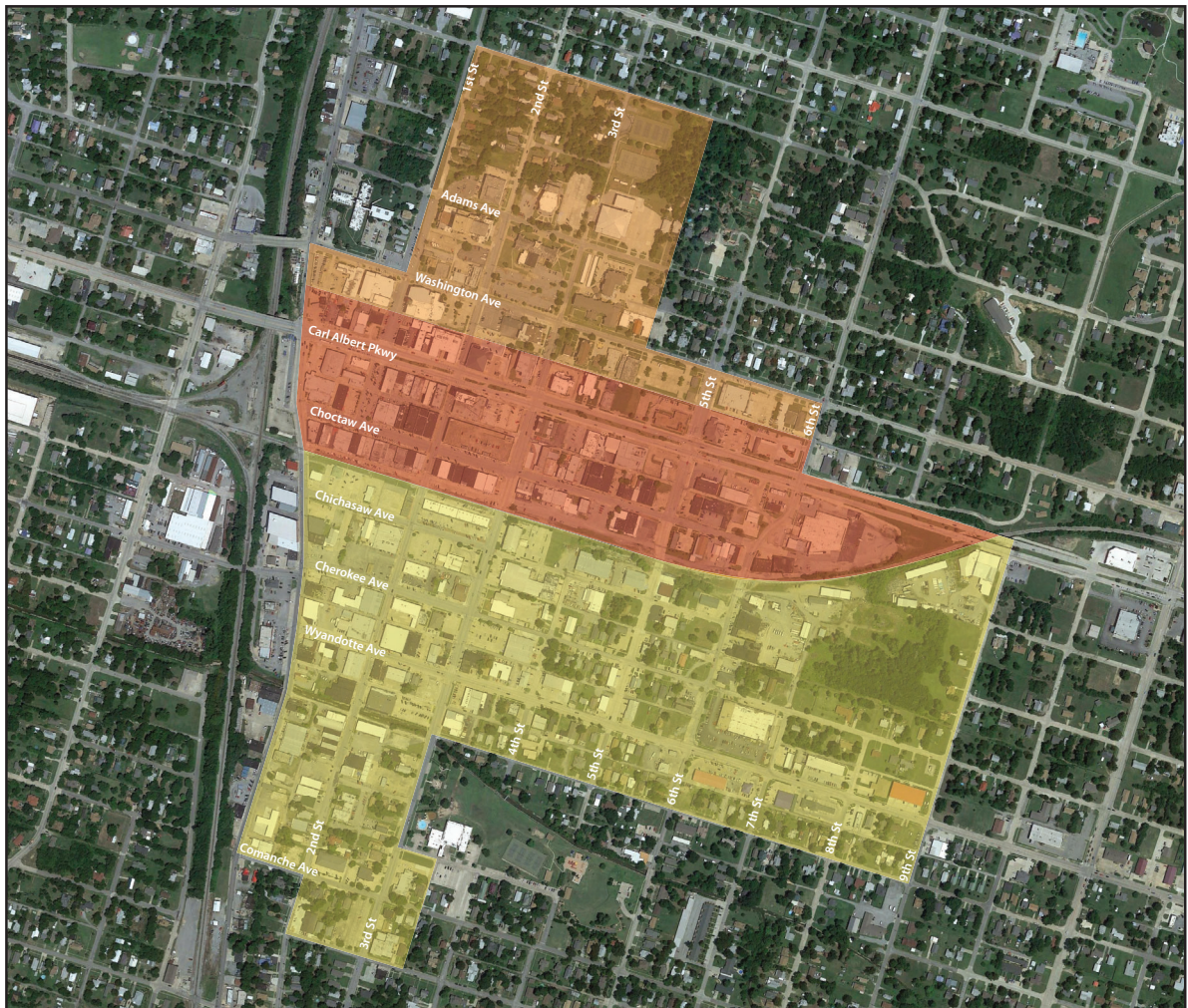


DOWNTOWN LAND USE MAP

VISION FOR WALKABLE DOWNTOWN STREET

① Wide sidewalks provide more programmable space for storefronts and encourage walkability.

② Wide bike lanes encourage cyclists with a wide range of experience and ability

③ Appropriately sized driving lanes encourage safer speeds and allow for easier and safer street crossings

④ Street trees provide shade for pedestrians and commuters.

⑤ Parallel parking allows for wider sidewalks.

## MIXED-USE 1: INSTITUTIONAL

As the seat of government, McAlester has several institutional and civic uses clustered in this area. Historic buildings and the uses they house are anchors, helping to generate additional worker and visitor activity that helps maintain downtown as a key destination in the region.



## MIXED-USE 2: CORE

This area has the greatest mix of uses in this mixed-use center. The combination of retail uses, restaurants, and housing units make this a vibrant 24/7 environment. Buildings, which are generally taller than buildings in other areas of downtown, may be devoted to single use; however, a vertical mixture with commercial space on the first floor transitioning to office and/or residential uses on upper floors are common. Public spaces of various sizes, configurations and purposes are integrated. The line between public and private space, especially along streets, is blurred as sidewalks and plazas serve as extensions of indoor spaces.
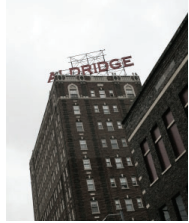


## MIXED-USE 3: BUSINESS

Complementing the core, the predominant use of this area is business. Smaller scale buildings are typically occupied by professional offices, services, and small shops. These, too, drive activity in downtown to support the creation of a vibrant place.



## DOWNTOWN GOALS

- Bolster walkability through the use of street trees, bench seating, wayfinding
- Encourage pedestrian-oriented traffic flows
- Facilitate active building uses that support safe and viable street edges
- Spur surrounding redevelopment and catalyze well-defined edges
- Establish as the de facto community gathering space
- Reinforce McAlester's identity through gatherings and festivals

*Reference LUD-7 for the full list of recommendations for Downtown



VIBRANT STREET AT DAY & NIGHT

ACTIVE STORE FRONTS


DOWNTOWN PEP RALLY


PERMANENT FARMERS MARKET


DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK CAFES

## DOWNTOWN AS THE HEART OF THE CITY

In Public Survey No. 2 - Respondents frequently expressed that Downtown was very important to the identity of McAlester and will continue being essential to its future growth and development.
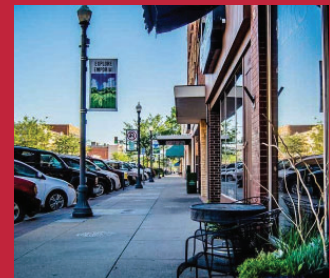
## CASE STUDY: EMPORIA, KS

Historically an agricultural and manufacturing town, Emporia's downtown vacancy rate spiked in the early 1980s. Through the use of creative financing strategies, citizen cooperation and vision, and municipal flexibility, Emporia was able to fill and revitalize once vacant storefronts and sidewalks. The developments are bolstered by city and county efforts to connect existing and potential downtown businesses to federal, state, and local funding sources. Strategies include:

- Entrepreneurial support from both state and local foundations and organizations, including zero-interest loans from the Kansas Department of Commerce
- Downtown design guidelines
- Historic preservation tax credits
- Investment in grant programs
- Loan guarantee programs
- TIF districts
- Establishing cooperative teams of code officials, engineers, firefighters, and zoning staff to assist local business owners in renovation efforts

Source: EPA, "How Small Town and Cities Can Use Local Assets to Rebuild Their Economies: Lessons from Successful Places"

## FOCUS AREA 2 - OLD TOWN



1. Shade from trees and scents from plants and flowers encourage activation of sidewalks.
2. Wide sidewalks provide more programmable space for storefronts and encourage walkability.
3. Banners help define visual identity of districts.
4. Unique paving provides identifiable, physical boundaries of Old Town district.
5. Implementing shared bike lanes and lightly-defined street parking encourages safer traffic flows at more appropriate speeds.
6. Street lamps encourage use and increase safety of streets and sidewalks at all times of the day.

OLD TOWN CONCEPT

Old Town is a key component of the City's history. Conserving the elements that comprise Old Town helps convey the story of McAlester's evolution.  The City of McAlester should strive to protect the character of the place in Old Town and make investments that will enhance the quality of the experience and the viability of existing and future businesses located there. Decisions regarding Old Town should include development within and adjacent to it; provide the basis for regulatory controls, if appropriate, to reinforce the City's expectations for this historic place; and define design features to introduce to further demarcate the original boundaries.
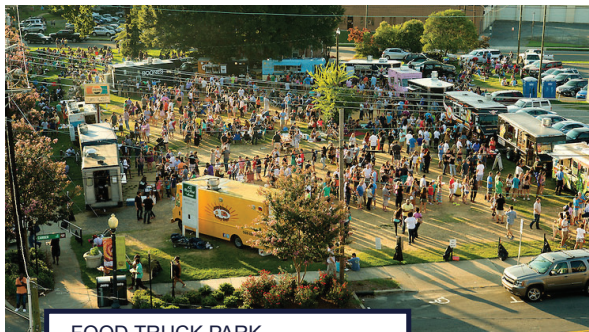


FOOD TRUCK PARK
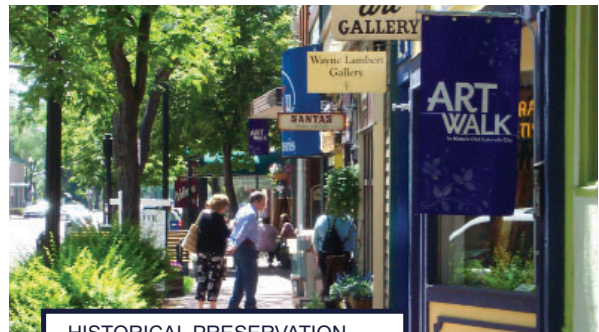


HISTORICAL PRESERVATION

## OLD TOWN GOALS

- Celebrate rich history through music and themed events
- Identify district edges through design
- Establish as a node for residents immediately surrounding Old Town
- Fortify unique identity through adaptive reuse of buildings, and new buildings that complement the historical context
- Revitalize streets by implementing pedestrian-friendly sidewalk design and traffic flows

*Reference LUD-9 for the full list of recommendations for Old Town



OLD TOWN DISTRICT BOUNDARY

# FOCUS AREA 3 - MAIN STREET CONNECTION


REPURPOSED SERVICE STATION INTO A COFFEE SHOP
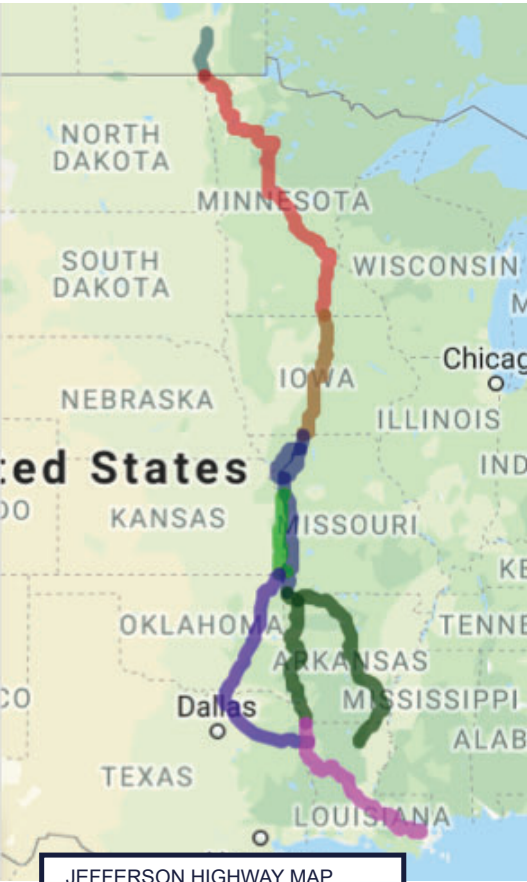

JEFFERSON HIGHWAY MAP

The 1.5-mile connection between Downtown and Old Town along Main Street is currently an area in need of investment to restore it to the viable business location it once was. This segment of Main Street is also part of the Jefferson Highway Project, a 2,300-mile route between Winnipeg and New Orleans that was named to honor president Thomas Jefferson's "greatest real estate deal in history" for the Louisiana Purchase, according to the McAlester News-Capital. This connection will provide safe vehicular, bike, and pedestrian movement; the appropriate relationship of future development to the street; and streetscape elements to ensure consistency and variety in the appearance and experience of the corridor. Long term, such improvements, should bolster efforts to improve Downtown and Old Town, and demonstrate the City's support for the Jefferson Highway Association's vision.


REPURPOSED GAS STATION

Old Town

Main Street

Downtown

CONNECTION NODES



DISTRICT-BASED WAYFINDING
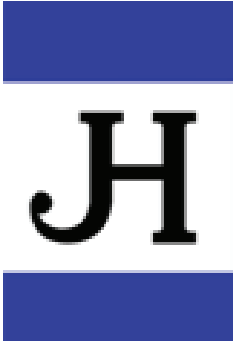
## CONNECTION GOALS

- Identify valid intersections to serve as points of interest for a series of experiences
- Encourage adaptive reuse of viable buildings
- Link segments of Main Street through incremental redevelopment of buildings and infrastructure
- Seek east/west connections between neighborhoods separated by the rail line
- Establish requirements for improved and aesthetically pleasing street parking

*Reference LUD-10 for the full list of recommendations for connection

Clearly defined nodes at Old Town, E. Electric Avenue, E. Monroe Avenue, and at the intersection of Main Street and Carl Albert Parkway may be the focus of incremental investment. Neighborhood-oriented services and gastronomy may facilitate cross-track connections. Incremental redevelopment focused on the reuse of older service structures offers lower-risk opportunities such as watering holes or cafes.

## FOCUS AREA 4 - WYANDOTTE AVENUE/ WADE WATTS AVENUE



① Street trees provide shade and shelter for commuters and pedestrians.

② Angled parking allows for easy parking without eliminating pedestrian-friendly sidewalks.

③ Distinctive paving and banners welcome visitors traveling from Highway 69 to downtown McAlester.

④ Well-defined bike lanes provide greater safety along key commuter corridor.

⑤ Mix of uses encourages street activity at all times of the day, while streetlights bolster safety.

WYANDOTTE STREET CONCEPT

As southern boundary of Downtown, this corridor connects Downtown to U.S. Highway 69 on the east side of the City. Over time, this corridor has been transitioning from predominantly residential to nonresidential uses. This corridor will be defined by a smooth mix of compatible uses. Improvements to the streetscape, sidewalks, and the road itself will ensure safe vehicular, bike, and pedestrian travel, particularly for those who live along or near the corridor and depend on this route to commute daily to workplaces located on U.S. Highway 69. The redevelopment potential here may present opportunities for initiating investment in Downtown that is consistent with desired changes, as expressed by the community.



This intersection is the critical juncture of the Wyandotte / Wade Watts Corridor and Downtown. The empty lot on the southwest corner provides a great opportunity for redevelopment serving both of these zones.

WYANDOTTE REDEVELOPMENT MAP

WYANDOTTE DEVELOPMENT

## WYANDOTTE AVENUE/ WADE WATTS AVENUE GOALS

- Bolster as a strong transition from Downtown to Highway 69 corridor
- Ensure pedestrian and bicycle connectivity
- Develop as Complete Street through the implementation of strategies such as well-defined bicycle and vehicular lanes, sidewalks, benches, and signage
- Minimize curb cuts
- Catalyze redevelopment by focusing initial development on key intersections

*Reference LUD-8 for the full list of recommendations for Wyandotte Avenue/Wade Watts Avenue

## CASE STUDY: DOUGLAS, GA

To regain jobs that were lost due to local manufacturing decline, Douglas, Georgia focused on starting small through efforts to support small businesses and entrepreneurs. In conjunction, Douglas shifted its development focus to incremental improvement and preservation of existing building stock. Through competitive grant-writing programs, the City was able to secure both federal grants and regional funding. By centering development efforts on local business economy and investing in the community public spaces, Douglas has dramatically reduced downtown vacancy, and was the first community in Georgia to be designated as "entrepreneur friendly" by the state. Strategies include:



- Initial investments focusing on the public realm (i.e. facade and streetscape improvements)
- Focus on small businesses and local entrepreneurs allow for increased economic diversification
- Grant-writing initiatives
- Comprehensive local resources on the steps to starting a business, including zoning codes, tax policies, etc.
- Community leadership training
- Emphasis on maintaining mixed use and historic character and redeveloping vacant sites

Source: EPA, "How Small Town and Cities Can Use Local Assets to Rebuild Their Economies: Lessons from Successful Places"

4 | # REALIZING THE VISION

**LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT DESIGN**

**HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS**

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE + NATURAL RESOURCES**

**INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES + SERVICES**

**TRANSPORTATION**

**COMMUNITY HEALTH + WELL-BEING**

Implementation of this plan is a shared responsibility. The City of McAlester, working with a wide variety of partners, including local, regional, state and federal agencies, private developers, area organizations, and landowners, will take the lead. The following recommendations along with specific strategies, or action steps, will aid efforts to achieve the goals and realize the vision reflected in the Future Land Use and Conservation Map. The recommendations and strategies are in no particular order. They are presented to enable those involved in implementation to effectively evaluate and determine priorities and identify short-, mid-, and long-term tasks.

The project team, with input from the Steering Committee, has identified several priority actions steps to be considered immediately following plan adoption.

# LAND USE + DEVELOPMENT DESIGN

Future development goes well beyond land use. To fully address land use relationships and development quality, design must be considered simultaneously. Therefore, policies related to land use and development design are presented together.

## LUD-1: Encourage development consistent with Moving McAlester Forward

- Implement the comprehensive plan as a working document to guide the future growth and development of McAlester
  - In the consideration of development proposals and related rezoning applications, refer to the comprehensive plan, particularly the Future Land Use Map, as a guide.
  - Refer to the plan to align public investments with areas delineated as growth areas to attract desired development.
  - Evaluate the Land Development Code (Chapter 62 of the City Code) to determine the need for amendments or rewriting to ensure regulations facilitate development in accordance with the plan. Local regulations are one of the most effective tools for implementing an adopted plan. A careful examination of current provisions will reveal obstacles to achieving the vision for the future as well as identify opportunities to facilitate desired change.

## LUD-2: Grow within City's current footprint

- Allocate resources to improvements within the area currently served by utilities, particularly water and sewer. Public investments can be leveraged to catalyze private investment in key locations. By prioritizing the served area over "greenfield" areas, the City can attract desired development while minimizing the burden to operate and maintain systems.
- Support development proposals for redevelopment and infill development that will utilize the capacity of the existing infrastructure.
  - Create incentives for redevelopment. Encourage investment in sites to remove, replace, or reuse structures that are currently underutilized or vacant, particularly in blighted areas or areas vulnerable to blight.
  - Encourage infill development. Vacant and underutilized parcels in the City that can be developed to complement surrounding development and take advantage of available utility infrastructure capacity should be supported.
  - Evaluate the Land Development Code (Chapter 62 of the City Code) to determine the need for amendments or rewriting to ensure regulations facilitate development in accordance with the plan. Local regulations are one of the most effective tools for implementing an adopted plan. A careful examination of current provisions will reveal obstacles to achieving the vision for the future as well as identify opportunities to facilitate desired change.

**LUD-3: Concentrate development in nodes where the mixture of compatible uses and density of development can feasibly support alternative modes of transportation and delivery of community programs and services.**

- Broaden the range of uses and increase density maximums in areas deemed suitable, as shown on the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP). These areas, with a mix of uses and higher density, create places where alternative forms of transportation and delivery of programs and services are more feasible (refer to HW and TR.)
    - Create a mixed-use district that facilitates a horizontal mix of uses, focusing on transitions between uses that increase compatibility, creates usable open space, maximizes parking, and creates a local circulation network that minimizes congestion on major roads.
    - Create a mixed-use district that facilitates vertical and horizontal mixed-use development. This type of district is most appropriate for downtown.

## LUD-4: Promote the conservation of open space in areas not currently served by utilities

- Limit future development of areas designated as "Conservation" on the Future Land Use Map to:
    - Preserve open space and natural resources. A land conservation approach to the subdivision and development of land should be encouraged in areas where the conservation of natural resources is imperative and where conventional development would have a negative impact on the protection of such resources.
        - Improve regulations to facilitate conservation and integration of natural areas.
            - Redefine "open space" to ensure land set aside has value. (Note: A public process should be conducted to define the primary open space types that the community values given environmental, economic, cultural and health benefits.)
            - Establish open space design standards to, at a minimum, address access where appropriate and create positive relationship to development.
            - To incentivize conservation design in target areas, consider amendments to the Land Development Code (LDC) for increased development design flexibility, provided higher standards for conservation of valuable natural assets in the area are met. For example, smaller lots may be permitted if open space area requirements are exceeded and the land set aside encompasses the "primary" resource types.
            - Allow by-right conservation design for subdivisions that do not exceed the maximum gross density of the zoning district, as a review and permitting process that is no more onerous than that associated with conventional subdivision design approval will help make conservation design an easy choice. The density bonus is built in. In other words, 100% of the total number of lots allowed could be accomplished. [Note: Conventional design typically cannot achieve 100% of the allowed lots once land area for infrastructure, floodplains, and other features are subtracted and the minimum lot dimensions (area and width) are met.]
                - Evaluate the current standards with a specific assessment of the following:
                    - The feasibility of open space provision and resulting lot sizes. With a range of open space percentages (minimum and maximum), continue to relate density bonuses to the amount of open space set aside. Reward those who choose to exceed the minimum open space requirements when using a conservation design approach. Reductions in dimensional requirements should help achieve lot sizes that are marketable. Consider standards that address both average lot sizes and minimum lots sizes.
                    - Potential impacts to adjacent neighborhoods. Assess buffer yard requirements to ensure a positive transition from existing development to new development and establish project boundary standards that require new lots to be equal to or greater than the size of the lots abutting that project boundary in an existing subdivision.

- Protect viable agriculture. Appreciated for their role in preserving the character and scenic quality of the area, many of the existing agricultural operations in the outlying areas (including county jurisdiction) are viable. Contributing to the local economy, these farms and ranches contribute more in taxes than they consume in services and should be protected from encroachment by new development.
  - Encourage new developments near working agriculture to be designed in a way that reduces conflict between future residents and existing agricultural operations.
    - Require increased building setback and the preservation of vegetated buffers between new homes and existing operations to distance new homes from such operations.
    - In subdivisions employing a conservation design approach, cluster development away from working agriculture.
  - Require working agricultural lands to be shown on preliminary development plans.

## CONVENTIONAL SUBDIVISION DESIGN

## CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION DESIGN



Source: Randall Arendt

### CONVENTIONAL VS. CONSERVATION

Analysis of recent major conservation subdivisions demonstrate an overall savings of 36% on construction costs when compared to conventional subdivisions.

### LUD-5: Protect and strengthen viable business locations

- Protect Steven Taylor Industrial Park and other employment areas where the City is promoting available buildings and sites.
  - Discourage or prevent residential development in close proximity to industrial development.
    - Require information about proximity to and being within a designated areas on residential real estate disclosure statements.
  - Rezone sites that are well-suited to the intended use to conserve the land for job-generating uses and to make such sites more attractive to potential employers.
  - Consider an overlay district that minimizes encroachment of new development within a specified distance of industrial sites (existing and zoned). Similar to an airport overlay district, this district should establish standards for the edge conditions that prevent or mitigate conflicts.
  - Participate in the provision of public amenities within or adjacent to employment sites to help make employment location more competitive/attractive.
- Limit commercial development to the areas shown on the Future Land Use Plan (FLUP). (Refer to ED-7.)
- Establish business corridors so investors understand the limits of and conditions associated with the properties within these corridors. (Refer to HN-1.)
- Locate civic anchors in downtown and other mixed-use nodes. Businesses thrive where residents are frequent visitors, and civic anchors help drive local traffic to these key areas. (Refer to LUD-3.)
  - Consider a new location within downtown for the McAlester Public Library. The American Library Association (ALA) launched Libraries Transforming Communities, an initiative to elevate public libraries' roles in facilitating community engagement. Participants have positioned their libraries as places for lifelong learning as well as community conversations and collaborations. Newer architecture supports the change, offering meeting rooms, state-of-the-art technology, and cafes. Relocate this facility to be:
    - Housed in a structure that is, or can easily be, upfitted with modern technology.
    - Sized to accommodate the many programs it delivers and will deliver in the future. Citizens and other stakeholders have expressed interest in a community center. The City of McAlester could seek opportunities to create a center in conjunction with library relocation. As a tenant in a larger structure designed to accommodate a wide variety of community activities, a library can host or help deliver programs. The McAlester Public Library already functions as a community center. This move should reinforce that role while modernizing the environment in which it operates.
    - Located in a place of prominence so it serves as a focal point, an organizing element. Consider a site that situates the building facing a civic green. This arrangement allows the library/community center space to extend to the outdoors and accommodate large events.
  - Help activate an area with civic and institutional uses that serve as catalysts for redevelopment and magnets for pedestrian activity that will help surrounding businesses flourish. Examples include branch libraries, post offices, and fitness facilities (YMCA).
  - Retain cultural destinations, such as event centers, museums, and entertainment venues (theaters).

## CASE STUDY: ADVANCED LEARNING CENTER WICHITA, KS

Modern libraries, such as the Advanced Learning Center in Wichita that opened in June 2018, function as community centers. This new library's features include meeting spaces that can be used after hours, spaces designed for distinct age groups, an audiovisual studio, several formal and informal collaboration spaces, a book store, and a coffee shop.

(Source: http://www.wichitalibrary.org/Locations/Pages/advanced-learning-library.aspx)



**LUD-6: Establish design standards for subareas of the City to conserve and reinforce the distinct character of each place**

- Delineate character areas and define each based on existing and desired attributes, and create a set of design guidelines for each area. Fort Collin's has a set of design guidelines for its neighborhoods that could be used as a model when creating a set of design standards.
- In the future, when market conditions indicate increasing demand for property, consider codifying the standards. Typically, with increasing demand comes a higher tolerance for more design standards in local regulations.
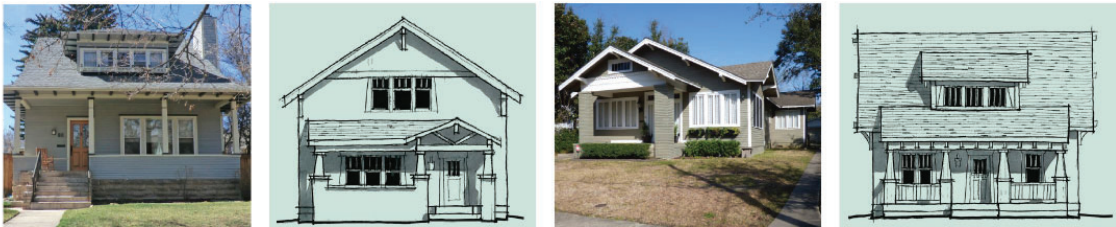


## CASE STUDY: FORT COLLINS, CO

The City of Fort Collins adopted the Old Town Neighborhood – Design Guidelines in February 2017 with the goal of preserving the traditional neighborhood character in their historic district while providing guidance on renovation and compatible infill.

(Source: https://www.fcgov.com/planning/otnp/pdf/OldTownDesignGuidelines_Adopted_highres.pdf?1488219005)

## LUD-7: Focus on downtown as the heart of the community and the region

- Consider creating a Downtown Master Plan.
    - Separate from the comprehensive planning process, encourage dialogue about specific changes in land use, public spaces, and design to build consensus among the many groups (including those with competing interests). Address:
        - The range of uses as well as scale (especially height), intensity, and compatible transitions.
        - Appearance and function of public spaces (including streets) to make the area aesthetically pleasing and to encourage residents to visit and linger within the district. Building on the Downtown Streetscape Project, develop a program for improvements throughout downtown, prioritizing key commercial streets.
        - Integration of residential units (Refer to HN-2).
        - Programming.
        - Utility upgrades.
        - Phasing.
- Establish a Tax Increment Financing District (TIF), utilize the proceeds to facilitate development, redevelopment and infill development. Participate in building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse in Downtown with incentive grants that remove barriers to private investment. (Refer to ED-9.)
- Expand the range of uses.
    - Encourage anchors to remain in or locate to Downtown, including the library, new community center, etc. (Refer to LU-5).
    - Think beyond retail and allow new forms of first-floor development. Keeping downtown active will require the integration of first floor uses that are "internet-proof." Our need for bricks-and-mortar store locations is diminished by our shift to internet shopping. So, we can no longer rely on retail establishments to fill space and make our downtowns and retail centers lively. Work with property owners to attract uses that offer an experience rather than or in addition to products. In combination with employment and residential spaces, these uses will give people reasons to spend extended periods of time in downtown.
    - Consider code amendments to facilitate desired changes in use.
        - Adopt one or more mixed-use districts to be applied downtown to allow more commercial and residential activity.
        - Facilitate residential development in the form of units above commercial space, attached units (i.e., townhomes), and multifamily units.
        - Allow small-scale industrial uses ("maker spaces") in downtown as part of the compatible mix of uses.
- Promote design that is consistent with design principles outlined in the Focus Areas.
    - McAlester Central Green
        - The central green space should catalyze redevelopment and promote active buildings that support safe and viable street edges along its perimeter.
        - As an essential anchor to the image of McAlester, the Central Green should act as the de facto community gathering space for local events and festivals.
    - Continue working closely with Main Street McAlester on developing an action plan to bring the Streetscape program forward (Urban Development Services For Oklahoma Main Street Program).
    - Amend the code to facilitate desired change in the design (scale, form, etc.) of the component parts.
        - Change design standards to allow better use of public sidewalk space in front of commercial tenant space. (Refer to LU-11).
- Activate downtown. As the logical starting point for visitors, Downtown should have a level of vibrancy that makes the area feel inviting and safe.

- Use mix (see above)
- Support/deliver programming.
    - Help create memorable, positive experiences.
    - Continue using city staff to support events and parades downtown
    - Advertise partner events located downtown on city website
    - Program a central downtown public space.
        - Bring events Downtown - programming tied to history, heritage, brand
        - High School pep rally
        - Avoid competition with Expo Center.
        - Beer festivities and Italian Festivals
    - Support the expansion of and frequency of the farmers market
    - Allow food vendors in designated areas.
- Make the necessary infrastructure investments. (Refer to ED-6 and ED-9) Widened sidewalks, narrowed streets, bike lanes, a central green, a bandstand, new utility lines, wireless internet, planting beds, bump outs, and planted trees, public transportation hub.

## LUD-8: Wyandotte/Wade Watts

- Initiate active street programming.
    - Host Better Block events to help the public envision the future of the corridor.
    - Organize street festivals that both celebrate local traditions and provide activity for businesses along the corridor.
    - Establish PARK(ing) Days to explore ways of improving pedestrian-oriented traffic and public space.
- Focus initial development efforts on the intersections, in particular the intersection of 3rd and Wyandotte. As the southern anchor of the north/south Downtown corridor, this intersection is an important transition and link between Downtown and the Highway 69 retail corridor.
    - Dispersing development too much has the potential of disincentivizing pedestrian activity and reducing the chance for the public to linger. By focusing investments, however, can act as catalytic links along the corridor. By developing strong anchors, pedestrians are more likely to spend more time along the street, visiting many different shops on one trip.
    - Promote street improvements near these catalyst redevelopment sites to further bolster the viability of pedestrian activity.
        - Provide benches, trees, planting beds, trash and recycling cans, wide sidewalks, pedestrian-oriented traffic signals, wayfinding.
    - Encourage zoning that allows for many different types of compatible uses, such as retail, service (barber, grocery store, etc.), office space, art galleries, restaurants, etc.
- Develop safe and logical strategies for commuters who walk to work.
    - There are many individuals who walk to work from central McAlester to the Highway 69 corridor. To make this walk a comfortable and safe trip, every effort should be made to:
        - Reduce curb cuts where possible,
        - Provide sidewalks and bike lanes along the entire corridor,
        - Plant street trees to provide shade,
        - Initiate a road diet, reducing the width of the vehicular street section, and,
        - Promote additional improvements that encourage pedestrian-oriented traffic.

## LUD-9: Old Town

- Develop a strong sense of district edges to help create a unified identity. This can be accomplished through strategies such as:
    - Patterned paving materials to indicate physical edges,
    - Design guidelines to create a cohesive and understandable building context,
    - District-specific wayfinding,
    - Consistent treatment of sidewalks through benches, trash receptacles, street trees, etc.
- Catalyze uses that add value to the social, historical, and financial value of Old town. Implement the findings in the Old Town Development Study.
- Encourage service-based redevelopment to act as a local node and to support adjacent neighborhoods.
    - Hair salon,
    - Grocers,
    - Exercise facilities,
    - Pet services, etc.
- Schedule / invest in new and existing annual events that are distinct to the historical context.
- Incentivize redevelopment of existing buildings in a manner consistent with the Old Town identity.
- Establish a unique sense of identity that does not compete, but rather works in union with adjacent districts (i.e. Downtown).
- Encourage consistent development on all Old Town street fronts.
    - Reduce width of driving lanes.
    - Lower the speed limit.
    - Add street trees and planters.
    - Provide adequate sidewalk seating and trash / recycling receptacles.
    - Install mid-block crossings to encourage pedestrian traffic on both sides of Main Street.
- Develop mixed-use zoning patterns to diversify uses.
- Explore ways to incentivize new development and lower the cost of entry for new businesses.
- Create gathering spaces for seasonal pop-up shops and/or food trucks.

## LUD-10: Improve link between Old Town and Downtown

- Create ordinances that aid in the organization of properties in an orderly and consistent manner. This will help create a consistent visual theme without investing in infrastructure.
    - Practice-based improvements vs. monetary-based improvements.
    - Parking requirements.
    - Operational waste removal.
    - On-site storage requirements.
- Add wayfinding that celebrates the history of Main Street and signifies the Jefferson Highway.
- Invest in streets and sidewalks strategically. Lean on the redevelopment of Old Town and Downtown to spur improvements along Main Street. Infrastructure improvements should only be made when properties are being redeveloped or in conjunction with required infrastructure maintenance.
- Focus investments on special events and related programming, such as;
    - Car Shows;
    - Music events;
    - Temporary pop-up activities, such as art festivals or food festivals, etc;
    - Seasonal festivals;
    - Jefferson Highway-themed events, etc.

**LUD-11: Encourage bringing the inside out**

- Widen sidewalks
- In commercial environments, activate the streets by allowing retail establishments and restaurants to "spill over" onto the sidewalks.
    - Amend regulations to support the use of public sidewalks and spaces with design standards that:
        - Enable outdoor seating. The lively atmosphere this creates can help make an area more inviting.
        - Define spaces within the public sidewalk where merchants can display goods without impeding safe pedestrian movement.
- Establish design guidelines for commercial areas to address the design of building facades. Specifically, standards may address the following:
    - Transparency – A high percentage of glass within the front façade (windows and doors) increases visual access into commercial tenants' spaces and expands the area that comprises the street.
    - Door placement and orientation – primary entrances should face and open onto the public street. While a separate and secondary entrance may be provided at the rear where a parking lot is located, the primary entrance should strengthen the connection of the tenant's space to the street it faces.

# HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS

As McAlester welcomes new residents to the area over the next two decades, protecting existing neighborhoods while expanding the variety of housing choices should be among the priorities.

## HN-1: Maintain or improve the value of existing homes and neighborhoods

- Strive for quality as changes occur over time.
    - Increase code enforcement efforts to address poor housing conditions and reduce number of condemnations annually.
        - Hire at least one additional staff person to focus entirely on code enforcement.
        - Work with the Pittsburgh Health Department to:
            - Develop and adopt a property maintenance code or housing code (pursuant to §19-866.27, Housing Code, of the Oklahoma Statutes) and conduct inspections of residential properties, referring to the standards set forth in the code. The Tulsa Health Department has a property maintenance code that could serve as a model for McAlester (https://www.tulsa-health.org/sites/default/files/page_attachments/TITLE55_071218_Book_THD.pdf).
            - Respond to complaints, referring to the Oklahoma Non-Residential/Residential Landlord and Tenant Acts (https://www.ok.gov/OREC/documents/Landlord%20and%20Tenant%20Act%20Update.pdf).
    - Adhere to standards for design to ensure a consistent minimum level of quality of infill and redevelopment.
    - Invest in infrastructure to maintain adequate service levels and safety as well as appearance.
        - Determine and implement a program to regularly assess and address the condition of existing sidewalks, streets, lighting, public spaces, utilities, and other City-maintained elements. The condition of such can affect perceptions of value, especially if they are not well-maintained.
    - Encourage grassroots efforts to improve neighborhoods by providing funding for local initiatives. As the Oswego Renaissance Association (ORA) can attest, the sense of ownership and community pride that stems from neighborhood-led initiatives can be long-lasting and produce economic benefits for the whole community.
        - Consider helping existing groups, such as Pride in McAlester, expand their roles in neighborhood and city improvement efforts.
- Minimize encroachment of commercial development into neighborhoods. This can erode and destabilize them.
    - Clearly delineate the limits of existing and emerging business corridors. By mapping districts, particularly through planning and zoning, city leaders and property owners can determine the lines that demarcate the neighborhood boundaries while allowing for the transition of former—or underutilized—residential structures and lots into compatible commercial (retail or office) space.
    - Amend the Land Development Code (LDC) and Zoning Map to establish overlay districts for the delineated business corridors, setting forth specific performance standards for development design at the edges that will create compatible relationships with—and/or deter development that is incompatible with—residential uses.

## CASE STUDY: OSWEGO, NY

The Oswego Renaissance Association (ORA) promotes the development, restoration, and preservation of healthy, vibrant neighborhoods and communities in Oswego, NY. The ORA provides resources, technical assistance, education and services to revitalize homes, downtown businesses, promote historic preservation and build positive communities. Through this organization, grants are available to homeowners in four city areas targeted for revitalization. According to ORA, $547,046 was invested in homes and neighborhoods through the program in 2017. To date, over $2.0M of private investment has been leveraged into Oswego's Renaissance Block neighborhoods.

(Source: https://www.oswegonyonline.com/)



GRANTS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUR HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The Oswego Renaissance Association (ORA), in partnership with the Shineman Foundation, Pathfinder Bank, Novelis and other strategic partners, has begun a strategic, multiyear program for revitalizing the City of Oswego's neighborhoods. This program is guided by a market-based revitalization plan funded by the Shineman Foundation. Currently, Neighborhood Pride Grants and Renaissance Block Challenge grants are available to homeowners in 4 city areas targeted for revitalization. In addition, Paint Oswego grants and resources are available property owners in the city regardless of location. See options below that may be available to you. *Start a renaissance in your neighborhood.*
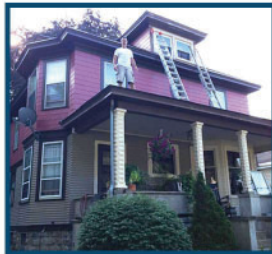
### Grants for Homes & Properties

The **RENAISSANCE BLOCK CHALLENGE GRANT** provides matching grants to property owners who apply in clusters of 5 or more properties on a block! SEE HOW TO APPLY
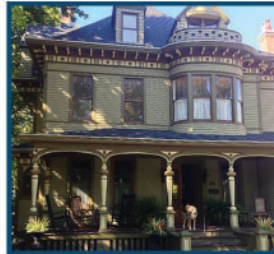
### Grants for Painting Homes

The **PAINT OSWEGO program** provides resources and grants to property owners who are interested in painting their property in beautiful historic color schemes SEE HOW TO APPLY.

### Grants for your whole neighborhood

The **NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE GRANTS** provide funds to improve your street, parks, playgrounds or improve properties in a coordinated way to beautify your neighborhood! SEE HOW TO APPLY.

- Encourage safe communities and neighborhoods.
  - Create and implement "Crime Free & Prevention Programs" similiar to Midwest City & Norman.
  - Offer voluntary Vacant/Rental Property Registration Forms.

## HN-2: Seek opportunities to expand the range of housing options within the community

- Evaluate housing in all residential areas and establish a method to improve housing conditions.
  - Conduct a comprehensive housing study. Expand on the work completed with the Housing Study for Market Rate and Affordable Multifamily Units and Single Family Residential located in Pittsburg County, OK (2015) to assess the conditions of existing housing stock. Total projected demand should consider forecasted growth over the next 5+ years and discount units that do not meet Oklahoma Uniform Building Code standards (and standards that may be established in the future through the adoption of a local housing or property maintenance code). The cities of Joplin, MO and Norman, OK have completed such studies in recent years.
  - Seek grants from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Small Cities Program (https://okcommerce.gov/community/cdbg/). According to the CDBG Small Cities FY 2019 Application Guidelines, over $86,000 could be allocated to the City of McAlester. These funds could be leveraged to fund local rehabilitation projects that are among the eligible activities listed in Section 105(a) of The Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (HCDA). (Refer to https://okcommerce.gov/assets/files/grants/CDBG_Small_Cities_Guidance.pdf.)
- Expand the variety of housing to appeal to a broader range of people. Income levels, lifestyles, and physical challenges are among the many factors that affect housing preferences. An inclusive community recognizes the importance of having a broad range of options available. As an economic development tool, housing choices can bolster efforts to attract young talent to the City.
  - In downtown, encourage residential units be developed above commercial space.
    - Facilitate conversions and upfits
      - Participate in building rehabilitation and adaptive reuse in Downtown with incentive grants that remove barriers to private investment.



*In Charlotte's Brightwalk neighborhood, single-family homes (foreground), apartments (background), and townhomes are part of the housing mix in this neighborhood designed for a wide range of income levels.*

- Allow Multifamily development in areas close to employment centers. Such areas are indicated on the Future Land Use Map as Multifamily Residential. Multifamily buildings are also suitable for areas are indicated on the Future Land Use Map as Mixed-Use.
  - Amend the LDC to allow attached single-family and Multifamily units in these areas. Such units should be allowed as a by-right use provided they are constructed in accordance with location, density, and design standards that ensure compatibility with the context.
- Consider cohousing development. According to The Cohousing Association (www.cohousing.org), "cohousing is an intentional community of private homes clustered around shared space. Each attached or single-family home has traditional amenities, including a private kitchen. Shared spaces typically feature a common house, which may include a large kitchen and dining area, laundry, and recreational spaces." For seniors, cohousing presents an opportunity to live independently in a private residence while building relationships with other residents through the management and use of shared spaces. As suggested in Aging in Community (2013 revised edition) by contributing author Charles Durrett, the social network that forms contributes to the sense of well-being, sense of community, and sense of belonging. It creates a built-in support system, which is especially important for those who cannot drive or face other mobility challenges.
- Encourage "city homes" in Medium Density Residential, Multifamily Residential and Mixed-Use land use categories. City homes look like single-family homes from the street but are designed for two separate housing units, one above another. With this approach, affordable housing options can be integrated into an area of single-family homes without changing the character of the neighborhood.
- Encourage attached single-family housing units designed to match the scale of detached single-family homes.
  - Two-, three-, and four-family homes that, like city homes, have the appearance of detached single-family homes should be integrated into neighborhoods to diversify the housing choices and affordability. To ensure the compatibility of such units with detached single-family homes, require the following site design standards be met:
  - Height of structures shall not exceed the height of surrounding detached single-family homes.
  - Façade facing the public street shall not have more than one entrance.
  - Parking for all units shall be accommodated on site in garages and/or in surface lot(s) internal to the site and screened from public view with the building and/or vegetation.
  - Accessory structures shall be limited to one per development site.



*From the street, the structure has the appearance of a single-family home.*



*Actually, three units comprise this residential building. Each unit is accessible from the shared driveway and can accommodate parking for two cars per unit on site.*

- Support the development of smaller units.
  - Encourage the application of the Cottage House Development Overlay District in appropriate locations.
  - Encourage, and amend the regulations to allow accessory dwelling units on lots with single-family homes. Such accessory dwelling units (ADUs) may include units above or as an addition to garages, stand alone units, or units attached to the principal structure. Establish standards for such units, considering the following:
    - Size relative to the principal structure. The height is typically less than that of (or up to a percentage of the height of) the principal structure. The maximum heated floor area is typically a percentage of the heated square feet of the principal structure.
    - Maximum size of footprint. Typically the footprint is a percentage of the footprint of the principal structure and/or cannot cause the impervious area of the lot to exceed a specified maximum.
    - Lot standards. The ADU setback is typically equal to or greater than a specified distance behind the front façade of the principal structure, and ADUs may be in the side and rear yard setbacks for the lot, provided a minimum distance (typically five feet) from the property line is maintained.
    - Entrance. A separate entrance into the ADU is typically required, and orientation of the entrance may be specified.
    - Room allowances. Kitchen, minimum/maximum number of bedrooms, a minimum of one bathroom.
    - Utilities. Power, water, and sewer service must be provided to the ADU, and may be on separate meters.
    - Occupancy requirements. Typically, the owner of the property must reside in either the principal structure or the ADU. Limitations may be placed on number of occupants in the ADU. Relationships, such as relatives of homeowner or caregivers, may be specified but are becoming less common.
    - Parking. Require a minimum of one off-street parking space for ADU in addition to spaces required for principal structure.

    Shawnee and Tulsa are two Oklahoma cities that are among several that have adopted similar regulations. The following is a link to Shawnee's ordinance:
    - http://www.shawneeok.org/document_center/Departments/Planning/community%20development/ZoningCodeDisclaimer.pdf
    Refer to model ordinances and templates, such as the one produced by AARP:
    - https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/livable-communities/documents-2015/ADU-report-AARP-APA.pdf

- Facilitate the provision of more housing options for seniors and the integration of such housing into the fabric of the community.
  - As an alternative to the existing senior living communities (Belfair and Burgundy Place) that are frequently located along highways and disconnected from neighborhoods and services, allow various forms of housing that appeal to older adults and reduce the isolation that some many face.
    - Small, detached single family homes (i.e., patio homes).
    - Apartments and condominiums.
    - ADUs (Refer to previous page.)
    - Pocket neighborhoods
    - Cohousing
  - Encourage independent and assisted living facilities within the neighborhoods where residents can walk to shops and grocery stores, participate in neighborhood activities, and interact with neighbors on a daily basis.

*A concept developed by Ross Chapin in 1995, a pocket neighborhood is a type of senior living community that is designed around the senior neighborhood concept. By definition, a pocket neighborhood is a planned community featuring multiple single-family homes or duplexes. Homes are built on a smaller scale in what is commonly called a cottage. Homes are constructed around a centralized element, such as a common garden, courtyard, community center, or wellness facility. The goal with a pocket neighborhood is to provide a cohesive and collective community for residents. This encourages social engagement and the feeling of being neighborly.*

*https://www.seniorliving.org/lifestyles/senior-neighborhoods/*

> ADDING A SMALL RENTAL UNIT TO A PROPERTY—TYPICALLY KNOWN AS A GRANNY FLAT OR AN ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (ADU)—IS A VERY BASIC WAY TO INCREASE HOUSING OPTIONS IN A COMMUNITY, PROVIDE EXTRA INCOME FOR A HOMEOWNER AND ALLOW HOUSING FOR PEOPLE OF DIVERSE AGES, ESPECIALLY SENIORS OR YOUNG PEOPLE.

--Strong Towns
https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2017/8/14/strength-test-accessory-dwelling-units

## CASE STUDY: PORTLAND, OR

Portland, Oregon has been widely recognized as the leader when it comes to ADUs in the United States, as reported by the Portland Monthly. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) were formally adopted by the City of Portland with the purpose of increasing the available housing options, expand affordable housing options, and provide a means for residents (seniors, single parents and families with grown children specifically) to obtain extra income, security, and companionship.

(Sources: https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/title33_complete_print.pdf
https://www.pdxmonthly.com/articles/2018/2/13/is-portland-the-best-place-in-the-country-to-build-an-adu )

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Today, fruitful economic development goes well beyond industrial recruitment. It is the result of effective promotion of the community's offerings to entice a wide variety of investors. While job growth is a primary goal, diversifying the economy is crucial. Economic development professionals are charged with selling potential employers and residents on the benefits of locating within the community. Many factors influence private organizations and individuals to invest in a community. Those factors range from quality of life the community has to offer to the availability of infrastructure, affordability, opportunities for growth, and perception—positive or negative—of the place.

**ED-1: Improve the image of the City**

- Utilize the branding that was developed for/by the City's Tourism department—and has recently been adopted as the new city-wide brand—to create one consistent message, which can help reshape the image of the City. With the new branding, a compelling message can be generated that focuses on the assets and potential opportunities. The resulting message may help tell the story—the history—of the City. It may convey that McAlester is a city of entrepreneurs and outdoor enthusiasts. It may celebrate the natural features. It may showcase education and opportunities for life-long learning.
- Promote City's assets and opportunities.
  - Create an inventory of assets, which may include, but are not limited to, the following: historic sites, museums, Masonic Temple, Old Town, Lake Eufaula and outdoor recreational opportunities (hunting, fishing, mountain biking, hiking), craft beers (Krebs Brewing Co. had three in Top 100 Best Beers in the World list in 2018), the arboretum, the Southeastern Expo Center (and events hosted there), International Order of the Rainbow Girls, etc.
  - Raise awareness through programs, events, wayfinding signage, and public art that can bring such assets into the spotlight. By highlighting what is special about the place, the City can help citizens develop a stronger appreciation for their community.
  - Expand the ways the City can leverage its assets to attract more visitors and to bring the community together. Events that celebrate the history and culture build community pride and, for some, foster a sense of belonging.

- Improve the appearance of the City.
  - Invest in the public realm and align investments with identity. Create a sense of place in key areas, especially gateways and downtown, reinforcing the brand and the image the City wants to present. These key spaces are ideal locations to use physical elements to make a statement about the City, to tell the story. Something as simple as the choice of public art should be consistent with the brand message.
  - Address dilapidated structures, particularly on sites close to the entrances into the City, through code enforcement.
  - Support community efforts to improve the City.
    - Initiate additional Better Block projects similar to the Choctaw Avenue Streetscape Style Guide.
    - Continue to fund the work of Pride in McAlester to further beautify the City. Pride in McAlester has been working since 2008 to improve the City's appearance by planting trees and assisting with trash removal and recycling.
- Upgrade visitor information and experience.
  - Future residents are often visitors that experience the place first on a very limited basis. By sharing the strengths and opportunities of the City, McAlester could successfully convert visitors (or short-term residents) to permanent residents.
  - Enhance the gateways. Consider:
    - Welcoming entrances with streetscape, art, and architecture that in combination create a sense of arrival.
    - Quality appearance by upgrading the streetscape and addressing dilapidated structures.
    - Representing the brand with physical features to reinforce the identity and distinguish McAlester from other communities, especially along Highway 69.
  - Expand the wayfinding for better orientation and navigation to destinations and activities.
  - Make McAlester a preferred destination for visitors as well as residents. Some current residents travel to other cities in their free time. By promoting the City's assets through visitor information and improving the overall visitor experience with programming, visitors and residents alike might choose to make McAlester their regular destination. (Refer to ED-10.)
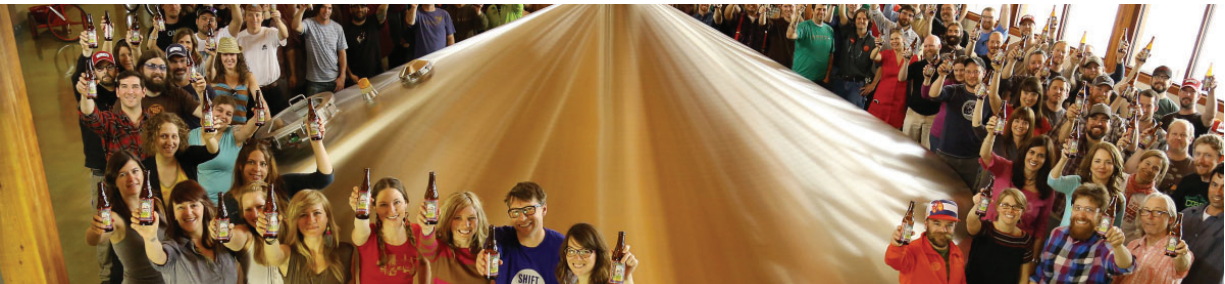


## CASE STUDY: ASHEVILLE (AREA), NC

- Sierra Nevada chose the location for the "access to good water for brewing and the outdoors for employee recreation."
- New Belgium also chose location for "great water, accommodating a vital lifestyle, and workforce with a get-it-done work ethic."
- Trek Bicycle Company chose proximity to mountain bike trails with a "variety of terrain" ideal for product development, testing, and promotion.
- Oskar Blues opened mountain bike resort

https://www.ashevillechamber.org/business-environment/success-stories/new-belgium-brewing/

### ED-2: Strengthen the business recruitment strategy

- To coordinate the efforts of city departments, particularly those that are already collaborating, formalize an annual joint work program that outlines strategic initiatives to implement the comprehensive plan. The work program should define the roles of each participating department and specify metrics to monitor progress. In conjunction, prepare annual reports that acknowledge the successes and highlight the advancement of comprehensive plan goals.
- Increase staff capacity of the City departments to accomplish objectives.
    - The Economic Development, Tourism, and Community Development departments should continue to work together, supporting each other's efforts. With limited resources, city departments operate with minimal staff. By working together, the departments can accomplish more than they would separately. This relationship should continue even as staffing increases.
    - Conduct a staffing study to determine opportunities for better utilization of available staff resources and the need for additional staff to support one or more departments.
    - Strengthen partnerships with McAlester Main Street, Pride in McAlester, the Chamber of Commerce, the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust, the McAlester Defense Support Association, OSBDC, and Choctaw Nation. By relying on the support of these organizations, city staff can do more with less.
        - The City of McAlester has a very strong relationship with the Choctaw Nation, which is vital to the economic success of the City over the long term. The City is continuously strategizing, cooperating, attending the same trade shows, working the same projects, and financially supporting one another.
    - Develop new partnerships when possible. Seek alliances with organizations whose missions align with one or more goals of the City.
- Continue activities of the City's current economic development work program, including responding to requests for proposals (RFPs), attending trade shows and recruitment events, and hosting three Oklahoma Southeast regional events annually.
- Improve inventory of available sites to be more competitive.
    - Invest in infrastructure to make the available inventory more attractive.
        - Focus near-term investments on Steven Taylor Industrial Park by:
            - Increasing roadway and railway access.
            - Increasing utility capacity. Specifically, expand wastewater and natural gas capacity.
    - Increase the number of "shovel ready" sites. Identify a group of contiguous parcels to promote. In addition to extending infrastructure to the selected sites, consider rough grading as well as "regional" stormwater management to serve multiple parcels and maximize developable area within each. Other improvements, such as access drives, may enhance the appeal of available sites.
- Upgrade the City's website to better promote available sites and buildings.
    - In the short-term, continue to work with the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (DOC) and Choctaw Nation in updating the City's current inventory on their websites. Provide a link on the City's website to the "Available Buildings & Sites" page of the DOC's website (http://locateok.com/) and explore the possibility of embedding the DOC map(s) within the City's website.
    - In the future, as resources are more available, investigate the mapping software offered by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce or the Choctaw Nation to enhance the City's capabilities, in terms of mapping, and improve the functionality of the City's website.

- Based on the results of the rebranding effort, attract employers and encourage the growth of new businesses.
  - Update the recruitment and retention strategy around that brand.
  - Continue to attend trade shows and target businesses whose missions or products align with brand.
    - Consider strategies aimed at getting the attention of manufacturing companies that could benefit from the location, such as a fishing equipment manufacturer.
- Promote other improvements, such as quality of life (especially outdoor opportunities), higher education, skilled workforce and workforce training, and housing options, which also influence location decisions.
  - Emphasize the quality of life as an advantage that can be marketed by businesses/companies to recruit top talent. Quality of life is just part of the equation and should be included in the set of factors to be addressed, as employers can include such features in the set of attributes when showcasing McAlester to potential candidates.
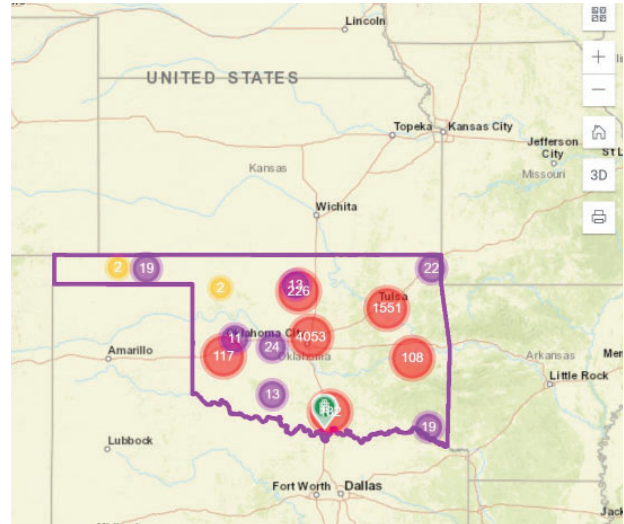


*Partnering with OK DOC, the City utilizes the capacity and functionality of their website to promote sites and buildings in McAlester.*



## CASE STUDY: PIVOT CYCLES, PHOENIX, AZ

Founded by entrepreneur Chris Cocalis in 2007, Pivot Cycles now employs 34 people and distributes to 30 countries. The company is located in Phoenix where the trails offer the ideal range of conditions for product testing. According to Pivot Cycles, "The terrain is a mixture of sand, stones and rough steps. 29ers can show off [the bikes'] benefits in roll-over performance, as well as offering more traction up and downhill in sandy corners."

Source: Nicholas Shaw https://enduro-mtb.com/en/factory-visit-a-visit-to-pivot-cycles-in-the-usa/

### ED-3: Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses

- Identify and support local companies that are in a growth mode.
  - Survey businesses more frequently to try to determine which businesses can be helped.
  - Establish/maintain a close working relationship with growing companies to ensure timely communication of possible City assistance as they evaluate options and make decisions about next steps.
- Provide assistance that assures the presence of an existing McAlester business over the long term but remain flexible as the needs of each vary. Consider:
  - Expansions/relocations - Some are seeking larger space or a location with better infrastructure but lack the resources to expand or relocate. Rather than lose such companies to other cities, assist them with efforts to locate suitable sites and buildings and consider different forms of aid, such as building upfits to adapt such spaces to the intended uses.
  - Workforce – Some require assistance finding and hiring skilled labor and/or training employees for specific jobs. City staff should continue to work directly with these local businesses and institutions (Eastern Oklahoma State College and Kiamichi Technology Centers) to help bridge the gap between employers and educators and ensure training aligns with employer needs.
  - Ideas – Growing a business successfully requires creativity. Linking start-ups with more seasoned business owners through the City's Economic Development Department can save growing businesses time and money.
  - Support services – Accounting, information technology (IT), and marketing are some of the basic business services that can be costly for a small business. Offering resources through the City's Economic Development Department or other cost-effective manner can help companies minimize such costs and make investments in growth-related activities.

### ED-4: Increase opportunities for higher education

- Attract more and expand existing institutions and programs. For example, seek to create a satellite location within the City for the University of Oklahoma's (OU) Tom Love Center for Entrepreneurship (http://www.ou.edu/entrepreneurship) and, working with OU, help build the resources locally to launch graduates into business.
- Link growth in higher education to the brand by facilitating connections between employers and programs.
  - Continue to build relationships between employers and programs to ensure curriculum of workforce training aligns with employers' needs.
  - Work with employers to create work-study programs. Encourage employers to engage students in one or more of the following:
    - A practicum is an experiential course with two interrelated components. Every week, students engage in practical work (either a real-world project under their professor's supervision or fieldwork at an outside organization) and participate in a seminar that focuses on the doctrine, theory, skills, and ethical questions that arise in that practice area.
    - An internship usually refers to a one-term work assignment, most often in the summer, but not always. Internships can be full- or part-time, paid or unpaid, depending on the employer and the career field.
    - Co-op typically refers to a multi-work term agreement with one employer; traditionally with at least three work terms alternated with school terms, resulting in a five-year degree program for what would otherwise take four years. Co-ops are traditionally full-time, paid positions.

*Choc Beer Co. Brewmaster Michael Lalli checks on a boiling batch of Gratzer beer in the brewing room of a facility upfitted specifically for Krebs Brewing Co., with assistance from the City of McAlester, in Steven Taylor Industrial Park.*

*PHOTO BY NICK TROUGAKOS, THE OKLAHOMAN*
*https://newsok.com/article/3667164/krebs-brewery-helps-revive-polish-beer*



*mHUB fosters connections between local manufacturers, university researchers and our city's entrepreneurial community of makers and technologists, not to mention investors who are eager to support new businesses. By galvanizing these connections, mHUB ensures that the Midwest region's manufacturing industry continues to grow, lead, and reduce the cost and barriers to entry for physical product innovation (https://mhubchicago.com/).*

## CASE STUDY: TULSA, OK | 36 DEGREES NORTH

36 Degrees North is coworking space in a retrofitted car showroom in Tulsa. 36 Degrees North is the central gathering point for Tulsa's startup founders, small business owners, remote workers and innovative community leaders.



Source:

https://www.36degreesnorth.co/

### ED-5: Attract and help build a community of entrepreneurs

- In support of small and home-based businesses, maintain sufficient broadband access, and investigate the feasibility of city-wide wireless internet. The U.S. Department of Commerce stresses the importance of broadband access in the modern economy, calling it "an indispensable driver of economic growth and workforce development." (Source: https://www.commerce.gov/news/blog/2-16/11/access-broadband-fuels-workforce-development-and-enhances-job-skills)
- Appeal to young entrepreneurs who are attracted to urban environments with housing choice, such as downtowns outside of the major cities. In addition, those who are drawn to the area as outdoor enthusiasts, as living and working at the doorstep of fishing, hunting, hiking, boating and other nearby activities adds to the quality of life McAlester can offer.
  - Promote housing variety as it becomes available, especially in downtown.
  - Promote the range of activities within and outside of McAlester.
- Work property owners and local organizations to upfit space within vacant buildings in downtown for start-up companies. Their presence will help improve the vibrancy of downtown and will help support commercial development. Consider participating in the creation of the following:
  - Coworking space. With the City's participation, this could be a space where McAlester Main Street, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Oklahoma Small Business Development Center can occupy collaborative space along with local entrepreneurs and academics.
- A business incubator or accelerator that provides office space and support infrastructure for start-up companies with options for capital investment opportunities and a range of services, including mentoring and product or idea testing.
  - Support/develop kitchen incubators.
  - Support/develop art incubators.

*Young professionals, especially those who work from home, enjoy public co-working spaces. They act as a social environment that encourages collaboration and networking, while also providing an all in one, low cost office space for those who would normally be unable to afford formal office space.*

## CASE STUDY: TINKER | BRISTOL, RI

A new Manufacturing Incubator & MAKERSPACE in the historic downtown mills in Bristol, RI.

Source: https://patch.com/rhode-island/middletown/announcing-launch-tinkerbristol-new-manufacturing-incubator-makerspace-historic-downtown-mills

**ED-6: Invest in "priority" areas**

- With limited resources, the City should attract private investment by investing in key areas to create value. Such improvements will boost the City's image and increase the City's economic competitiveness (i.e., increase the likelihood that visitors, employers, and potential residents will choose McAlester as their preferred location).
  - Define/designate priority areas of the City to which resources should be allocated. Consider the following (refer to Future Land Use map):
    - Downtown
    - Steven Taylor Industrial Park
    - Employment Area around the hospital
    - Employment Area around the airport
    - Gateways – commercial concentrations at city entrances where future infill and redevelopment activity is likely
    - Old Town
    - Highway 69
  - In the priority areas, focus public investments on the following to attract private investment:
    - Public realm enhancements, such as streetscape, parks, green spaces, plazas, etc. (Refer to ED-7 for more specific recommendations.)
      - The City is currently considering or already implementing specific improvements: creating a green space (Arvest Park in downtown), adding amenities to current parks (playground equipment, exercise equipment, and/or splashpads), adding bike lanes (downtown and surrounding the hospital), constructing greenway trails and sidepaths along streets, improving downtown streetscape, etc.
  - Infrastructure improvements, including water and sewer upgrades, stormwater management, streets, bike and pedestrian facilities, etc.
    - Increase roadway and railway access
    - Increase utility capacity. Specifically,
      - expand our wastewater capacity
      - expand our stormwater capacity
      - expand our telecommunications



## CASE STUDY: HICKORY, NC

Hickory Inspiring Spaces Master Plan was the basis for a $40M bond campaign, which is helping to fund major streetscape, greenway, Downtown square, and city gateway improvements.

Source: http://www.hickorync.gov/content/bond-program

### ED-7: Encourage infill development and amenities in existing employment centers

- Allow a mix of complementary uses around the hospital that help transform it into an accessible, vibrant work environment. Support rezoning applications for:
  - Supporting healthcare services.
  - Residential development, particularly higher density, near the hospital. This would provide opportunities for more affordable housing near this important workplace.
  - Supporting commercial development, such as dining establishments and personal services.
- Encourage usable outdoor space within and adjacent to development. Greenspace that functions as community gathering spaces, space for recreation, and space for just enjoying being outdoors can offer respite for employees as well as residents. As an economic development tool, the amenities integrated into the work site will help attract talent. Google is one of several companies in the U.S. that recognize the value of quality spaces on site and have incorporated trails and pocket parks into their campuses. Collaborative spaces next buildings give employees an opportunity to work outdoors. (Refer to HW-3.)
  - Invest in public spaces that serve two purposes: (1) attract tenants—and their employees—to employment centers, and (2) provide outdoor space for nearby residents to enjoy. Partnerships with existing employers to fund the design and construction of such spaces may help facilitate the creation of them in the near term.
  - Modify regulations to require usable open space, particularly where such spaces can adjoin or connect to the City's emerging system of greenspaces and trails.


### ED-8: Improve access to Steven Taylor Industrial Park

- Investigate the feasibility of directly connecting to the Indian Nation Turnpike from State Highway 31.
- Improve rail access to sites within the park.
- Purchase more property to increase the inventory, or prepare (grade) sites within.
- Improve the signage to help with navigation to the industrial park.
- Enhance the appearance of the entry approach using low-cost techniques.
  - Provide streetscape along the route that is used to travel between the Indian Nation Turnpike and the Steven Taylor Industrial Park: US-270, N4035 Rd/New Baker Rd, and OK-31.
  - Create a welcoming, attractive entrance appropriate for the scale of the development.
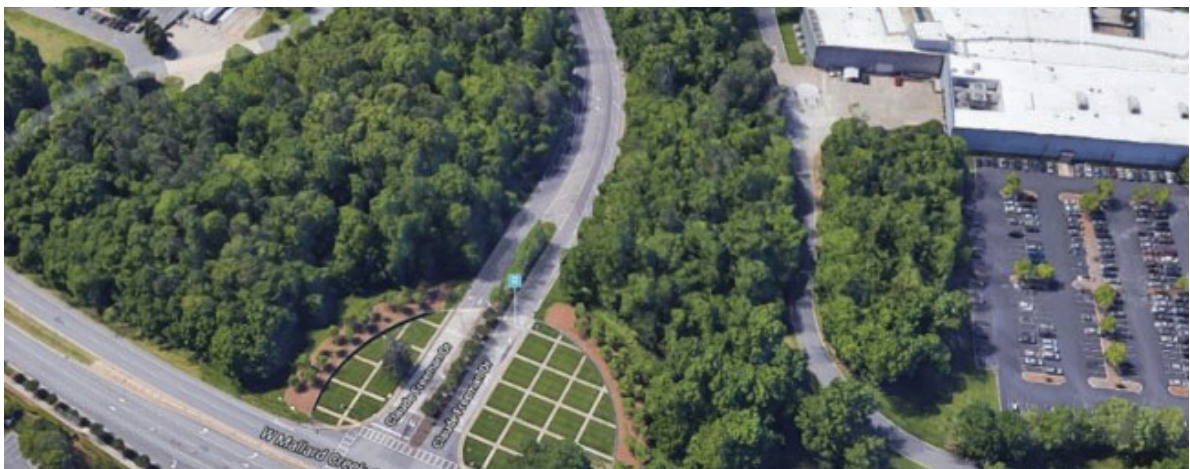
> Research shows that suburban office parks today are depressing and life-sucking places to spend eight hours a day. But turning them into mixed-use developments… make the suburbs more livable and ensure that residents don't have to travel all over the place to do the things they want–eat, shop, go to a movie, etc.
>
> *-Fast Company*

## CASE STUDY: HART, MI | KITCHEN INCUBATOR

The Starting Block is the first commercially licensed kitchen incubator in the state of Michigan. Since starting in 2006, about 150 to 200 clients have used Starting Block facilities and 22 clients "graduated" from the program by moving on to their own facilities and even building their own licensed kitchens. An estimated two to three jobs are created by each client.



Source: http://placemaking.mml.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/casestudy-hart-2015.pdf

**ED-9: Support efforts to reinvest in and revitalize downtown**

- Continue collaboration with and financial support of organizations that are involved in economic development and promotion of McAlester, including but not limited to McAlester Main Street, Pride in McAlester, the McAlester Defense Support Association, and the economic development arm of the Choctaw Nation.
- Assist property owners, local business owners and others who collectively are transforming downtown into a vibrant center. The City recognizes the importance of the Downtown district as a center for cultural significance and creative growth. However, funding is limited. (Note: sales taxes generated from this district still represents approximately 6% of sales taxes generated within the City limits.) Consider options that enable change.
  - Utilize the proceeds of Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) to remove barriers for private investment. Consider:
    - Assistance with code compliance for historic buildings
      - Fire protection
    - A revolving loan fund or loan guarantee
    - A façade grant program
  - Continue supporting incentive programs that encourage businesses to relocate downtown
    - Matching grants for investors to remodel and enhance downtown buildings
- Embrace national trends regarding downtown revitalization.
  - Adjust code/permits, continue adjusting ordinances to allow more commercial and residential activity to make it easier and less costly to buy and improve historic buildings
    - Work with the State of Oklahoma to develop a building rehabilitation code that can be used in historic building renovations.
- Build on recent interest and investment in downtown by helping McAlester Main Street (MMS) create an experience.
  - Construct and program a central downtown public space. (Refer to Land Use + Development Design.)
  - Keeping downtown active will require the integration of first floor uses that are "internet-proof." Our need for bricks-and-mortar store locations is diminished by our shift to internet shopping. So, we can no longer rely on retail establishments to fill space and make our downtowns and retail centers lively. Work with property owners to attract uses that offer an experience rather than or in addition to products. In combination with employment and residential spaces, these uses will give people reasons to spend extended periods of time in downtown.
    - Encourage the local banks to follow Capital One's model for cafés, with coffee and pastries supplied by local businesses. This helps activate the streets with a different type of destination. According to Business Insider, "Capital One's latest venture, the Capital One Café, is a new effort
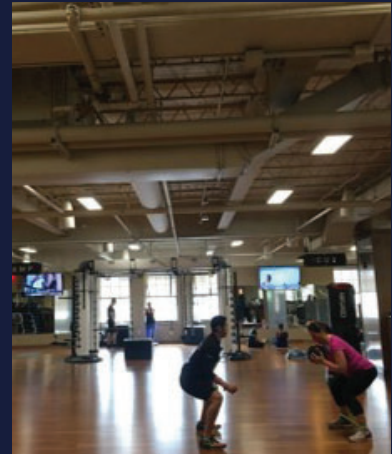
to market to millennials that appears aimed at bridging this disconnect — a move to win over their hard-won loyalty and lay a new foundation for relationship-based banking." People are encouraged to hang out in these cafés that offer coffee, food, coworking space, and money coaching. (Source: https://www.businessinsider.com/inside-capital-one-cafe-for-millennials-2017-2#the-cafs-are-meant-to-connect-financial-professionals-and-young-people-in-a-relaxed-and-stress-free-environment-dean-said-customers-are-over-the-corporate-thing-she-added-saying-that-she-hopes-people-stumble-in-and-discover-us-7)



## ED-10: Improve Highway 69 corridor as a regional commercial center

- Improve the appearance of the corridor.
  - Invest in the streetscape, especially in the gateway areas and key intersections. The landscaping should be welcoming as well as an indicator of access to the flanking businesses to help with navigation.
  - For consistency, create an overlay district for the corridor the establishes landscape requirements to be met in conjunction with new development, redevelopment, and expansions.
  - Avoid the monotony of the commercial strip by limiting the amount of continuous commercial development. Encourage residential development to have frontage along the corridor, especially where restricted access is less desirable for commercial tenants.
- Improve circulation.
  - Encourage multi-tenant development that shares access from an internal network of private streets. The organization to perpendicular streets in combination with green space can offer a walkable, inviting commercial destination. It also reduces local traffic and related congestion on the highway. Modify regulations to facilitate this type of arrangement as well as cross-access easements and shared driveways.
- Strengthen existing commercial properties along Highway 69 as well as downtown by limiting commercial development to existing areas. Too much can create an oversupply and a dispersed pattern of commercial development, which can diminish real estate value.

"To keep Suburban Square occupied, Kimco has reduced its emphasis on stores that sell the kind of commodities you take home in a shopping bag, in favor of ones that offer experiences — what economists call the "experience economy." The company is looking for more internet-proof tenants, including restaurants, walk-in health clinics, gyms, hair salons, music clubs, and unique specialty retailers. It's also planning to build apartments next to Suburban Square as a way of creating a built-in market for its commercial tenants. "We want people who will come here two to five times a week," Kimco's Tom Simmons, who heads the Mid-Atlantic division, told me.

"Life Time opened its doors only a month ago, but plenty of eager customers already seem to be streaming through its doors. The coworking space, called Life Time Work, has sold out its 120 membership spots. On a weekday morning, I saw entire families descend on the building. After dropping toddlers at child care, one parent headed up Strawbridge's lacy metal staircase to the treadmills, while another took the elevator to the fourth-floor coworking office. Families later regrouped for lunch in the restaurant (called Life Cafe, of course). Some wandered outside to enjoy the new pocket park that Kimco just created by replacing a former delivery zone with turf and chairs."

http://www2.philly.com/philly/columnists/inga_saffron/online-versus-mall-philadelphia-experience-economy-life-time-kimco-realty-20180531.html

## ED-11: Grow tourism

- Increase communication and promotion.
  - Continue efforts to tie the promotion of McAlester to the City's brand: Small town. Big frontier.
    - Pertaining to the "small town" aspect, explore ways to celebrate the history and culture of McAlester.
      - Consider entertainment opportunities that bring people into this community and bring residents together. They may be focused on cultural traditions, well-known people, or interesting moments in history. Beginning with 150th anniversary celebration in 2019, host events and festivals to showcase
        - the City's Italian, Eastern European, and Choctaw heritage through music and food;
        - the emerging craft beer industry (with Krebs Brewing as potential host); and
        - the people. McAlester is the birthplace of some famous people, including singer and songwriter Reba McEntire.
      - Develop programming, especially in Old Town and Downtown and along the "Jefferson Highway Project" corridor, that draws attention to the information and artifacts featured at museums and historic sites.
    - Bring the "big frontier" within reach by delineating the regional open space network and the range of outdoor activities available while emphasizing McAlester as the logical base of operations.
      - Work with TravelOK to expand the information on the McAlester page: https://www.travelok.com/listings/search/15?city=mcalester
      - Prepare an area guide that features a map with McAlester at the heart of a variety of regional destinations. The guide should be produced as a marketing tool and to complement TravelOK's Outdoor Guide. Seek funding from sponsors, such as area hotels, restaurants, and businesses in McAlester. The guide could include information about lodging, dining, agritourism and other features, compiling data from the various free brochures about the state that are available through TravelOK.com.
      - Maintain or improve parks, pools, and other facilities to ensure the quality and longevity of such destinations.
  - Leverage events at the Expo Center.
    - Extend visitors' stays from part of a day to a whole day, weekend, or week with the promotion of other activities. For example, entice folks downtown before or after a rodeo with discounts at participating downtown restaurants and businesses.
    - Raise awareness of events open to public (ticketed and non-ticketed events) by improve the usefulness online tools:
      - Step 1 – Color code the existing community calendar ("Calendar of Events") on the City's website to distinguish venues and/or types of programs. For example, use two different colors of text to differentiate programs offered at the library from events at the Expo Center.
      - Step 2 – Improve functionality of the community calendar with a filtering mechanism.
      - Step 3 – Create a separate website for Tourism with a link from the Department's page on City's website. Here, a calendar devoted to tourism-related events could be included along with interactive maps of attractions as well as downloadable PDFs of maps, brochures, and coupons. Forms for reserving venues for private events could be made available on this website.

*Right: McAlester Halloween Downtown Event*

- Define a more targeted tourism strategy.
  - Conduct visitor surveys to better understand who is coming to McAlester, why they are coming, and where they stay and for how long. With data collected, define the target audiences and gear the content of promotional materials and outreach efforts accordingly.
- Facilitate bookings at all area venues.
  - Continue relationships with partner organizations that have venues available for private functions. On the website, publish a comprehensive inventory of all available venues and rates for each, and provide links to a PDF of the inventory as well as to the website of each venue.
  - Upgrade the Expo Center or, as a long-term initiative, create a new center that is sized and equipped to accommodate a wider variety of shows and events.
- Increase the number of overnight stays within McAlester and reinforce the City as the base of operations for regional events.
  - Work with hoteliers to promote lodging in McAlester (Note: Hotels along Highway 69 depend on business travel on weeknights to hit their revenue targets. By helping hoteliers increase revenues with weekend occupancy, the City may also help increase visitor spending at local restaurants and businesses.)
    - Encourage hotel managers to run specials in conjunction with area events, including fishing tournaments hosted at Lake Eufaula.
    - Help coordinate shuttle service from participating hotels to event locations.
- Improve the Tourism Department's resources to facilitate success.
  - Maintain a highly visible, easy-to-find downtown location, even if the facility is relocated from its current building.
  - Increase the annual budget by generating more revenue from certain types of events. Consider a sliding rate scale or rate tiers to align fees with the type and size of each event. From the high-level events, seek a percentage of ticket and/or concession revenues.

# PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE + NATURAL RESOURCES

Municipal park and recreation systems across the U.S. have evolved to include a wider variety of spaces to support a much broader range of activities. The composition of these newer systems has expanded the role of parks and recreation to address active living at any age, better environmental stewardship, and improved community health and well-being.

## PR-1: Improve and maintain existing facilities

- Assess the condition of existing parks in terms of the following:
    - Quality, considering the level of maintenance and potential need for replacement of structures.
    - Accessibility
        - Safe connections to nearby neighborhoods and schools.
        - Internal walkways and ADA requirements.
        - Lighting to expand the hours of operation where appropriate.
        - Wayfinding
    - Safety, especially:
        - Lighting of ballfields to expand the options for scheduling of events, with permission, and of walking tracks to extend the hours of use.
        - Hours of operation, considering the closure of parks between sunset and sunrise without permission from the City.
        - Landscaping to ensure visibility. Shrubs and small trees should be carefully located to not obscure views into the parks.
    - Landscaping for improved aesthetics as well as the users' comfort. Shade trees near picnic areas and other types of seating, for example, will help limit exposure to sun and heat.
- Following the assessment, develop a facilities plan that identifies the range of potential projects, defines associated costs, and prioritizes projects. The facilities plan should be used as input into the annual updates to the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP). (Refer to Infrastructure, Facilities + Services.)

## SUGGESTED PARK FACILITY UPGRADES/ACTIVITIES



- Walking, jogging trails (create more)
- Pool, swimming lessons (maintain)
- Music, concerts
- Cultural and other events
- Disc golf (maintain)
- Mountain bike trails (like Bentonville, AR)
- Public WiFi
- Trees, shade
- Restrooms

### KEY

- Existing Parks
- 1/2 Mile Walk to Existing Parks
- Potential Future Park
- 1/2 Mile walk to Future Park
- Potential Community Green
- 1/2 Mile Walk to Community Green

NORTH

*EXISTING PARKS AND POTENTIAL FUTURE PARKS*
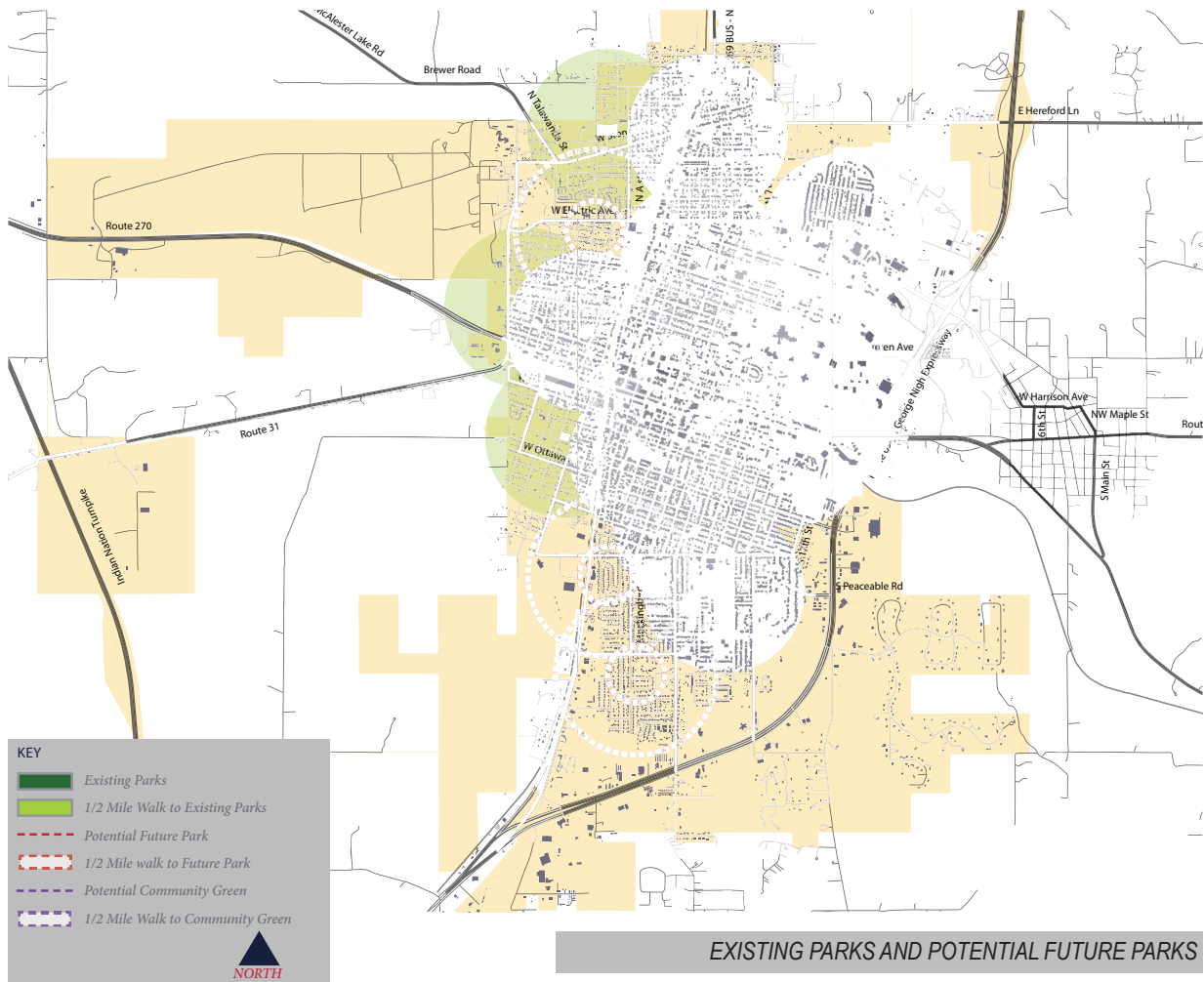




# CASE STUDY: BOSTON, MA | EMERALD NECKLACE MAINTENANCE COLLABORATIVE

- Park maintenance can be completed while simultaneously providing social benefits
- Horticultural skills, environmental education, leadership building, and job training can be accomplished through well designed programs for park maintenance volunteers
- Programs should be specifically designed for targeted groups such as youth or pre-release inmates to provide maximum benefits

Source: https://www.cityparksalliance.org/issues-a-resources/maintenance/case-studies/emerald-necklace-maintenance-collaborative

### PR-2: Create a network of active and passive recreation areas linked by trails

- Prepare and implement a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan.
  - The planning process should consider the following objectives:
    - Safe and equitable access
      - Consider the distance to facilities, quality of the pedestrian and bicycles facilities connecting nearby neighborhoods and schools, parking, lighting, and visibility Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).
    - Programming
      - Determine the adequacy of space(s) to deliver current and proposed programs, especially those pertaining to education and health, particularly fitness and healthy food programs. Other programming considerations may include community events, cultural activities, and social networking.
    - Increasing economic development
      - Create and maintain property values with open space amenities adjacent to development (or within, if partnership).
      - Attract investors with amenities.
      - Boost tourism. The network of passive and active recreation spaces and natural conservation areas should evolve to better serve the community and reinforce McAlester's role as a gateway into the vast region of recreation.
    - Improving community health
    - Supporting new technology, including free public WiFi in parks.
    - Protecting water quality and maintaining wildlife habitats and corridors through environmental conservation. (Refer to PR-3.)
  - Assess current park facilities to determine condition and adequacy of the systems to satisfy current needs based on applicable level of service (LOS) standards as well as future needs as the population increases.
  - Define the future system to clearly delineate
    - A hierarchy of current and proposed facilities distributed for equitable access.
      - Establish a target of >75% of the housing units within walking distance (½-mile) of a park
    - Community greenspace. Public greens and pocket parks two examples of greenspaces that serve an important function in the urban environment. (Refer to LUD-7)
    - Create linkages intended to improve accessibility and increase physical activity.
      - Based on the existing and proposed park locations, continue to delineate, design, and construct trails that connect facilities to each other as well as to neighborhoods, schools, and employment centers.
        - Require linkages to be made within development to help implement the planned trail system defined in the Trails Master Plan.  Land, or trails constructed to meet or exceed the City's standards, may be dedicated to the City.
        - Seek easements in corridors that lend themselves to trails, such as utility easements and creek corridors, especially where floodplains, which are not suitable for development, can be utilized.
  - Identify areas where land acquisition should be considered, particularly where future growth is anticipated.
  - Inform the creation of and updates to the facilities plan, the City's CIP, and the City's budget.
  - Support the pursuit of grants, such as Parks and Recreation Trust Fund (PARTF).
- Complement the City's system of parks with publicly-accessible facilities within private development.
  - Require the provision of active and passive greenspace in new neighborhoods
    - Amend the land development regulations to require a percentage of the project area to be set aside as open space, and a percentage of that to be usable and accessible.  The percentages should be scalable to the project type, size and density.

**PR-3: Promote conservation of open space and natural resources as development occurs**

- Coordinate growth management efforts with environmental management objectives. Open space planning should target environmentally sensitive areas so development conserves valuable lands and maintains effective distances.
  - Following the delineation of environmentally important open space, amend the standards in the LDC to ensure development is discouraged and adequate buffers are established.
- Bring the natural environment to the forefront of development.
  - Encourage natural areas as a component of future development. Rather than allowing the land set aside for open space to be the remnants after the development areas are configured, encourage the delineation of the natural areas as a first step in defining the development framework. In doing so, developers can ensure the natural amenities are visually and physically accessible. With access, the educational and health benefits can be realized. Like golf courses in decades past, such features can add value to real estate. Conservation of key areas can simultaneously support plant and animal habitats.
    - Open space requirements. (Refer to PR-2.)
    - Conservation design subdivisions (Refer to LU-4.)
- Encourage privately-owned public open space (POPOS): "POPOS are an alternative for the municipal to provide public open space without the direct costs to own and operate such spaces. These spaces, adjacent to public rights-of-way or access areas, include plazas, small parks, and gardens on ground level or roof tops." (http://www.asla-ncc.org/four-nights-with-three-lectures-part-2/). Like Seattle and other cities that have expanded open space networks with POPOS, the City of McAlester should enter into agreements with willing property owners. An agreement should be entered into only after a site is deemed appropriate (based on a set of criteria established by the City). Such agreements should contain provisions addressing design, location, access, maintenance, signage, and liability.
  - As an incentive for private property owners to create POPOS, offer increased density and floor area bonuses or offer expanded site development area through the abandonment of a city-owned alley that is no longer in use in exchange for the creation of a POPOS.
  - Amend land development regulations to establish eligibility criteria and design standards.
  - Determine an appropriate legal instrument to employ in establishing POPOS to ensure the quality of the space and access to it are maintained even as changes in ownership occur over time.
  - With each, record signed agreements that address access; location and orientation; design; maintenance/management; operations, programming, and temporary closure for events; signage indicating the space if for public use, rules, and hours of operation; the City's right to inspect the property; additions over time, such as seating for a café at edge; protected activities (i.e., public protests); and liability.

## CASE STUDY: SEATTLE, WA

The City of Seattle has been expanding their open space network with POPOS since the 1960s and have encountered most, if not all, of the issues a city could probably be faced with. In Seattle, Privately Owned Public Spaces are created as a public benefit as part of a private development project, usually in exchange for certain project advantages allowed by City code.



https://data.seattle.gov/Community/Privately-Owned-Public-Spaces-Map/52gz-md6f/data
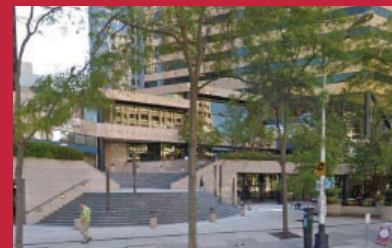
# INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES + SERVICES

With adequate public services, from utility delivery to public safety and emergency response, the City can ensure quality of life for its residents. This Plan continues the City's support of these services, ensuring that people do not worry about access to safe, plentiful drinking water, properly working sanitation system, and that they feel safe and secure in McAlester. The objectives of this goal include providing safe drinking water and sanitary sewage disposal at reasonable costs to customers, and serving and protecting residents, visitors, and business with adequate public safety resources.

CenterPoint Energy, which supplies natural gas to McAlester customers, reports that 80% of their infrastructure has been modernized. Public Service Company of Oklahoma, which supplies electricity to McAlester customers, reports that their infrastructure can handle additional load. Internet service is supplied by private companies, with some complaints from McAlester residents regarding speed and reliability. The City supplies water and provides sewer service.

## IC-1: Maintain adequate systems

- Consider the Life Cycle Cost for proposed capital projects. Evaluate long term costs of different design approaches
- Evaluate utility rate structure
- Complete a Water Master Plan to study the entire water system, including new treatment, distribution, expansion, and associated costs and potential affects to rates
    - Alternate water supplies: Lake Eufaula, Coal Creek
    - Modernize water treatment plant
    - Prioritize line upgrades
- Complete a Wastewater Master Plan to study the entire wastewater system, including, collection, treatment, expansions, and associated costs and potential affects to rates
    - Modernize two sewage treatment plants
    - Reduce infiltration and inflow
        - Replace clay tile pipes with HDPE using pipe bursting
        - Repair or replace manholes
    - Rehabilitate lift stations
- Implement Stormwater Master Plan
- Improve broadband internet service

## Community Services

Response times for emergency responders are judged to be adequate. There is a community desire to strengthen the relationships between McAlester's residents and emergency responders.

The former Carl Albert Federal Building has been repurposed, but has limited parking.
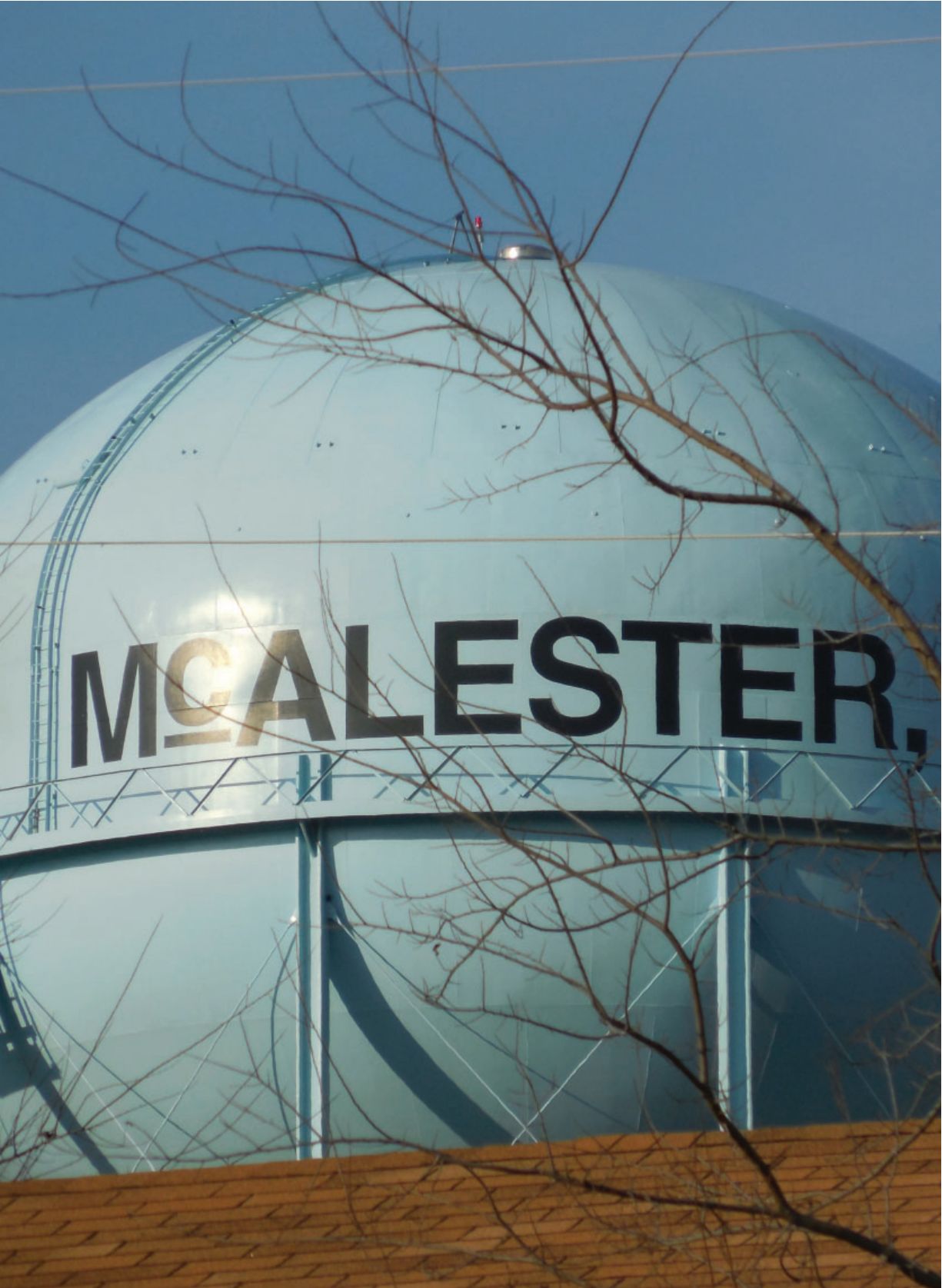
# TRANSPORTATION

Transportation planning is the process used by municipalities and other governmental entities to provide for the development of an efficient and appropriate transportation system to meet existing and future travel needs. The primary purpose is to ensure the orderly and progressive development of the urban and rural street system to serve the mobility and access needs of the public. Transportation planning is interrelated with other components of the urban planning and development process, and seeks to reduce the use of single occupant vehicles, make trips shorter, provides visible and convenient active transportation opportunities, and expands access management to preserve roadway capacities.

**Goal: employ best transportation practices by recognizing that the transportation system includes community facilities and must be developed and maintained to serve the entire community**

### TR-1: Improve and maintain existing facilities

- Continue focus on road and sidewalk maintenance programs
- Adjust financial capacity to maintain future greenways and trails
- Communicate and collaborate with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) to coordinate local transportation facilities with future State projects

### Roadway Improvements with Complete Street Infrastructure

Traditional roadway improvements provide for additional travel lanes to relieve congested roadway conditions and are recommended in locations where future projected traffic volumes will increase due to development and growth. For McAlester, most of the need for widening is within State right-of-way corridors.

For non-State right-of-way corridors, a Complete Street program offers significant enhancement of the aesthetics and over-all transportation function of a right-of-way. Streetscapes define a community's aesthetic quality, identity, economic activity, and health. When correctly designed, a streetscape completes the street by encouraging more pedestrian traffic, improving overall experience for users, and increasing biodiversity along urban areas. Well planned streetscape principles facilitate economic goals, improves public health, and enhances the environment.

## TR-2: Continued support of Complete Streets

- Continue to support and encourage Complete Street design elements in transportation projects as adopted by the City in April of 2017
- Consider incorporating appropriate bicycle facilities into resurfacing projects (see TR-4)
- Consider street upgrades to create complete streets where existing and forecasted traffic volumes permit conversion of travel lanes for bicycle and pedestrian facilities. A prime candidate for this improvement is Wyandotte Avenue / Wade Watts Boulevard from 3rd Street to US-69.



COMPLETE STREET EXAMPLE

## Access Management

In addition to the proposed roadway improvements, there are other non-capacity, transportation-related recommendations that can enhance the transportation system in McAlester, such as access management and driveway control. Access management is defined as the protecting of the capacity of existing transportation routes and systems by controlling access rights from adjacent properties. Access management techniques serve to limit and separate vehicle (and pedestrian) conflict points, reduce locations requiring vehicle deceleration, remove vehicle turning movements from through lanes, create intersection spacing that facilitates signal progression, and provide adequate on-site capacity to accommodate ingress and egress traffic movements.

From a land development perspective, access management assists in the orderly layout and use of land and helps to discourage poor subdivision and site design. Poorly designed entrances and exits to developments not only present a traffic hazard, but also cause increased congestion, which can create a negative image of the development. In addition, access management techniques, such as reducing the number and frequency of driveways and median openings, improve the appearance of major corridors. Scenic and environmental features can be increased, which improves the image of streetscapes and can attract additional economic development.

## TR-3: Improve access management

- Identify shared parking lots to decrease the need of lots
- Implement access control to preserve traffic flow
- Use traffic calming techniques

## TR-4: Address traffic congestion, highest collision rates, and potential development areas

- Develop a Transportation Master Plan
  - Consider future growth areas and anticipated traffic
  - Determine funding sources and develop a multi-year implementation schedule
  - Fund and execute projects
- Address current roadway infrastructure (refer to Pavement Management Systems Program 2013)
  - Assess pavement condition and develop an updated pavement management plan
  - Consider intersection improvements including additional turn lanes
  - Upgrade, interconnect, and coordinate traffic signals

## Targeted Walking and/or Biking Improvements

Targeted walking and/or biking improvements connect existing pedestrian and bike facilities to create continuous and safe alternative routes for users. Additional pavement is required for a bike lane. This additional widening will be needed on both sides of the street. A critical feature is to pave the bike lane continuously with the same material, thereby minimizing edges. This results in offsetting the bike lane from the curb when a standard concrete gutter pan is used on an asphalt street.

## TR-5: Increase mobility for all users

- Prioritize routes for bicycles and pedestrians by providing sidewalks, multi-use trails and bicycle facilities
  - Provide greater opportunity for pedestrian and bicycle access to schools, parks, and businesses
  - Promote opportunities for easily accessible recreation and fitness
  - Evaluate committed transportation projects, future transportation demand and destination accessibility to better coordinate future trail priority
  - Coordinate bicycle and pedestrian planning with thoroughfare planning
  - Enhance and protect the natural character of the City for trail alignments and supplement the urban forest through tree planting associated with the trail projects
  - Minimize bicycle and pedestrian barriers
  - Capitalize on transportation and recreation benefits in the local economy

## TR-6: Improve pedestrian facilities in new development

- Develop guidelines and standards to which new development must adhere, including cross-sectional widths for roads, planting, strips, and sidewalks for all road classifications
- Require sidewalks or greenway connections to existing or future trails, greenways, parks and schools in new development

## 2-LANE ROADWAY WITH
## PARKING AND BIKE LANES



**SECTION**
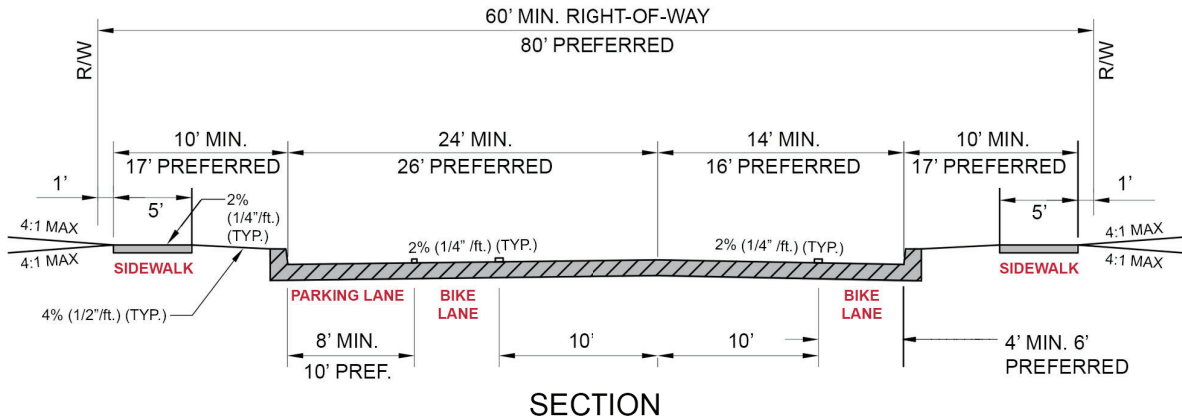
NOTE:
BICYCLE LANE
AND PARKING
STRIPES REMAIN
CONTINUOUS
WHEN PASSING
ALLEY AND
DRIVEWAY
ENTRANCES.

THERMOPLASTIC
PAVEMENT
MARKINGS LINE
4" (100 MM) WIDE
SOLID YELLOW

THERMOPLASTIC
PAVEMENT
MARKINGS LINE
6" (100 MM) WIDE
SOLID WHITE

4' MIN. 6'
PREFERRED

THERMOPLASTIC
PAVEMENT
MARKINGS LINE
4" (100 MM) WIDE
SOLID YELLOW

THERMOPLASTIC
PAVEMENT
MARKINGS LINE
6" (150 MM) WIDE
SOLID WHITE

**PLAN**
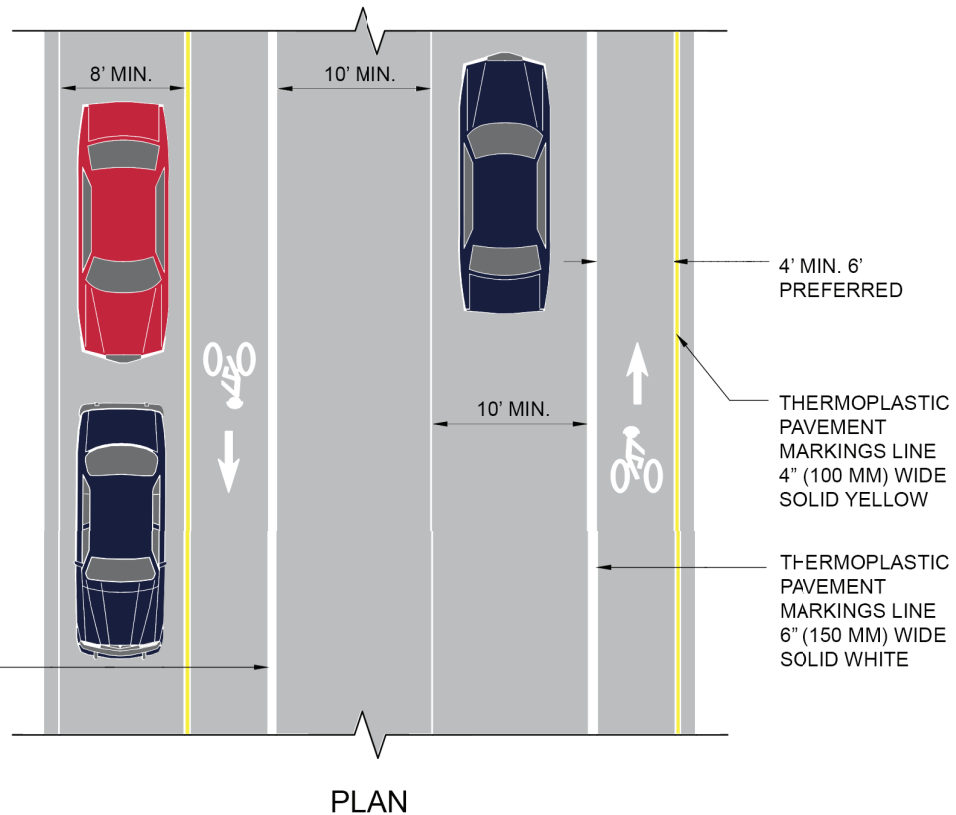
TWO-LANE ROADWAY GRAPHIC

**BIKE LANE ADDITION TO COLLECTORS
OR MINOR ARTERIALS - NO PARKING**



CONCRETE STREET          ASPHALT STREET
ALT. NO. 1

ASPHALT STREET
ALT. NO. 2
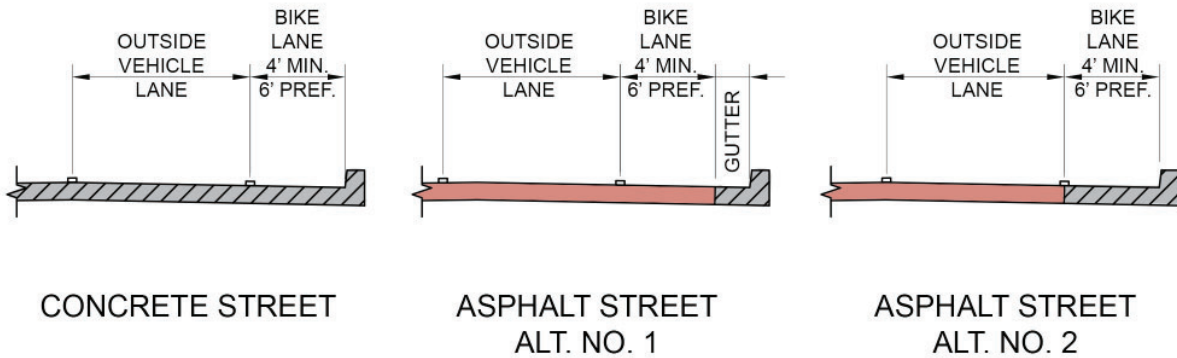
BIKE LANE GRAPHIC

### TR-7: Connect destinations with pedestrian and bicycle routes

- Increase bicycling related enforcement, encouragement, education and awareness efforts
- Formalize existing bicycle routes and prioritize bicyclist comfort and safety
  - Consider a maximum speed limit on roadways designated as a bike route.
  - Consider implementing MUTCD R4-11 "Bike May Use Full Lane" signage and appropriately placed Shared Lane Markings (SLMs) throughout existing on-road bike routes.
  - These elements should be considered especially along signed bike routes where road sections drop from four to two lanes to discourage edge riding by bicyclists using the route. SLM markings and lateral positioning should adhere to guidance provided in the MUTCD and the ITE Traffic Control Devices Handbook
  - Implement destination and distance wayfinding signage on existing and proposed bike routes
- Create a minimum grid for biking throughout McAlester that connects local and regional destinations
  - Most neighborhood streets are safe for biking, but in order to facilitate longer trips it is necessary to safely accommodate bicycles on a subset of collectors and minor arterials
- Consider pedestrian and bicycle projects
  - Update the 2011 Trails Master Plan
  - Coordinate/connect pedestrian and bike facilities
  - Determine funding sources and develop a multi-year implementation schedule.
  - Fund and execute projects

# COMMUNITY HEALTH + WELL-BEING

Through changes in the built environment as development continues and through improved coordination across local, regional and state agencies, the City of McAlester has an opportunity to address many of the factors that contribute to the health and well-being of its citizens. The recommendations and strategies presented in this and other sections (see references to recommendations in other sections) take into account the various aspects of wellness: physical, emotional, intellectual, social, occupational, environmental, and spiritual health. The direction the recommendations provide build on the progress the community is already making on several fronts.

### HW-1: Form a health alliance to better serve the interests of McAlester

- This group should be comprised of individuals representing local, state, and federal organizations that are working to address health issues in the McAlester area. Expanding the group that supports the Pittsburg County Public Health Department in the development of the County Health Assessment (CHA) every few years, include organizations that are concerned with all aspects of health. Quarterly meetings of the alliance will provide an opportunity for sharing ideas and data and channeling resources toward high priority initiatives to effect change.

### HW-2: Strive to make McAlester a healthy place to live and work

- Take a "Health in all Policies" (HiaP) approach to managing change in the City.
  - Work with area agencies to raise awareness among city leaders of opportunities to improve community health—and the many benefits of doing so—so the community's health becomes a key consideration in the formulation of local policies.
  - Work with public health officials to serve as experts on policy decisions, practice, and capacity affecting health and clinical services.
    - Host quarterly meetings to provide opportunities to discuss health data, emerging issues, and opportunities for addressing such issues as local policies are being considered, ordinances are updated, and initiatives are funded.
  - Pursue opportunities to educate City officials and employees, especially those who play a key role in developing City budgets, about how the built environment affects health and physical activity.
    - Define and implement a program to train city staff.
- Tie public investments to health.
  - Incorporate health and physical activity criteria into decision-making processes for capital projects, such as those in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
    - Support efforts to conduct health impact assessments (HIAs) in conjunction with project justification and budgeting decisions.
  - Pursue available grants for infrastructure improvements that will contribute to healthier living.
- Improve communication between the agencies operating within McAlester and Pittsburg County to raise awareness of the programs and initiatives of each and encourage coordination.
- Continue working with area employers and educational institutions to link job training curriculum to growth in existing and targeted industries. Economic development and job growth. (Refer to ED-4.)

- Promote downtown revitalization. A city's downtown area has an important and unique role in economic and social development.
  - Work with McAlester Main Street and other local organizations to raise awareness of programs and incentives that facilitate private investment and business success:
    - Assistance with design (facades and interiors)
    - Business consultation and education
    - Historic tax credits (Note: Such credits have recently stimulated investment in buildings on Choctaw Avenue and Carl Albert Parkway.)
    - Microgrants, façade grants
    - Economic development funds to locate downtown
    - Funding through TIF District programs, as funding becomes available

**HW-3: Ensure open space is more accessible**

- Improve and expand the system of parks to ensure accessibility and usability for all ages and abilities. (Refer to PR-2.) Consider locations (equitable distribution), park types, design, and hours of operation.
- Seek opportunities to integrate open space into new development and redevelopment.
  - Require open space that is physically and or visually accessible to the neighborhoods and employment areas. (Refer to PR-2.)
- Improve safety of places that provide passive and active recreation opportunities.
  - Encourage community policing. Connect neighborhood leaders with public safety officials to develop or expand neighborhood watch programs.
  - Integrate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) into the design of streets, open space, and development projects. (Refer to PR-2.)

## CASE STUDY: SAS CAMPUS, CARY, NC

**"By taking care of our employees, the rest takes care of itself."**

"The investments we make in employee health, well-being and work-life balance can be seen in a dedicated workforce, committed to moving up the ranks rather than out the door. SAS' turnover rate of about 4 percent is far below the industry average of 15 percent, which translates into consistent, long-term relationships for our SAS customers."

Source: https://www.businessinsider.com/sas-office-tour-2017-10

## HW-4: Foster active living

- Prioritize policies, investments, and programs that reduce barriers to physical activity in areas of the community with limited access to physical activity areas.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity at worksites. As a way of attracting and keeping talent, companies are changing workplace environments to include spaces for passive and active recreation. A 2012 study by the Brookings Institute concluded that regular exercise at works helps increase employees' happiness and overall productivity in the workplace. (Refer to ED-6.)
  - Implement the City's worksite policy and expand to private development with a worksite wellness program.
    - Modify land development regulations to require usable open space within sites and improvements that are geared for health exercise.
    - Encourage employers to incorporate equipment into usable open space to support employees' health and well-being.
- Encourage utilization of available community facilities.
  - Participate in the provision of usable space within or adjacent to employment. (Refer to LUD-5.)
  - Support physical activity on school sites. Continue shared use practice of making school grounds open to community for use after hours and on weekend for recreational purposes. If necessary, in the future, work with the School Board to keep school facilities accessible to the community with formal joint use (or open use) agreements.
  - Work with area churches and institutions to post signs to welcome the community on site to use outdoor recreation spaces. Such signs should note restrictions and policies regarding use.
- Promote active transportation.
  - Having adopted a resolution for complete streets, the City should seek opportunities to create a connected system of nonmotorized transportation facilities.
    - Coordinate the efforts of the City's Planning & Zoning, Public Works, and Parks & Recreation departments.
    - Continue to close gaps in sidewalk segments, particularly to provide safe routes to schools, employment centers, grocery stores (and other healthy food outlets), and services. The City's participation in identifying and funding these linkages could be aided by mapping tools, such as WALKscope utilized in Denver. "WALKscope allows Denver residents and visitors to collect data related to sidewalks, intersections, and pedestrian counts. This information will help create an inventory of pedestrian infrastructure in Denver, identify gaps, and build the case for improvements." (Source: walkscope. org)
    - Where feasible, incorporate sidewalks and bike lanes into city-maintained streets as they are improved. Such improvements may involve streetscaping, widening, resurfacing, and/or utility upgrades.
    - Amend land development regulations to include complete street standards and standards that require new development to provide sidewalk connections to public sidewalks and to adjacent development.
  - Having adopted a safe routes to school (SRTS) resolution, the City should seek grant funding to pay for necessary connections to support SRTS program.
    - Through a funded position or contract, expand grant writing capacity.
  - Augment wayfinding signs to include information that encourages walking and biking. Like signs downtown that indicate walk distances (in minutes) between common destinations, signs around the City should indicate short distances (in miles) to encourage alternatives to driving.
- Implement the McAlester Trails Master Plan to expand the system of pedestrian and bike trails. (Refer to PR-2.)
- Improve and expand the system of parks to ensure accessibility and usability for all ages and abilities. Consider passive activities, hours of operation, permanent lighting, and pavement materials. (Refer to PR-1 and PR-2.)

- Encourage and support compact, mixed-use development. (Refer to LUD-3.) According to the TSET Healthy Living Program, "locating places of employment and enjoyment near places where people live shortens the distance that people have to travel to get to work, the grocery store, a park, or a restaurant." Development in this form facilitates more active living by making walking or bicycling to those destinations more feasible.
  - Concentrate development in key areas by allowing higher development densities in places where pedestrian and bicycle facilities can be integrated into new development as well as the local transportation network.
    - Approve higher density development that meets criteria for multimodal transportation.
    - Invest in bicycle and pedestrian facilities where such development concentrations are desired.
    - Require new development seeking higher densities in these key areas to provide bicycle and pedestrian facilities that link to the surrounding network.
  - Promote mixed use development where a variety of complementary uses are integrated in a manner that:
    - Situate homes, workplaces, parks, grocery stores, and services (e.g., dry cleaning, daycare) in close proximity.
    - Can be feasibly linked by sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities.
    - Are designed to create a safe, comfortable pedestrian environment.

## HW-5: Improve access to care

- Increase number of primary care physicians. Aim to raise the number of primary care physicians in Pittsburg County by attracting qualified professionals to McAlester.
  - Promote the creation of quality neighborhoods and amenities. (Refer to PR-2 and HN-1.) Quality of life is a major factor in most people's location decisions, and it can be an important factor in successfully recruiting healthcare professionals to McAlester
- Work with schools, local agencies, municipal departments, health institutions, faith-based institutions, and community organizations to promote community mental health and social-emotional coping, as well as to integrate trauma-informed practices into their services. Like most states, mental health services are underfunded.  An initial step is a coordinated effort to (1) raise awareness of and share information about resources that are available within and just outside of Oklahoma, and (2) work with state legislators to remove barriers to remote services through which mental health patients can receive counseling and other support via teleconferences. Telecare (http://www.telecarecorp.com/) is one example of an organization providing such services.
- Permit higher density development in areas where it can be served by existing transportation infrastructure such as along major transportation crossroads [and where possible, along transit lines and clustered around transit hubs] where higher levels of access are available
- Expand transportation options to assist those in need to better access to care.
  - Encourage infrastructure for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit when addressing land use and development design in plans, budgets, development review processes, and other government decisions.
- Reach a higher percentage of the population with mobile units offering care and screenings. Examples include Mobile Smiles for dental care and OU Medicine Breast Health Network.  The Red Cross and other organizations offer mobile screenings for blood pressure and diabetes and distribute flu vaccinations.
- Continue emergency management training to address community issues, such as outbreaks



"Researchers are demonstrating the positive effects of nature on blood pressure, cholesterol, outlook on life, and stress reduction. Spending time in nature is linked to longevity and decreased risk of mental illness."
-US Dept of Agriculture

## HW-6: Strengthen social connections

- Create places for and program community events that bring the community together. (Refer to LUD-7, 8, 9, and 10 and PR-2.)
- Ensure seniors remain engaged, active members of the community.
  - Promote the Senior Citizen Center at the J.I. Stipe Recreation Center, which offers meals; health and entertainment programs; and transportation at little to no cost for area seniors.
  - Involve seniors in mentoring programs.
  - Encourage the integration of senior housing into walkable neighborhoods.

## HW-7: Improve access to healthy food

- Seek opportunities to improve food access.
  - Advance efforts to create a food charter and a better system of healthy food access. A pilot program could have several facets, such as community gardening; support for local agriculture and farmers' market; improved school nutrition programs; assistance with Women, Infant, Children (WIC) and Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) enrollment; and expanded reach of healthy food vendors. An outgrowth of the effort could be the establishment of a local food policy council to coordinate the efforts of multiple groups with a shared mission of increasing healthy food access and to form partnerships with state and federal agencies (e.g., CDC, USDA, and OSDH) to improve access to funding and other resources.
  - Increase the number of healthy food outlets.
    - Having adopted a healthy food retail resolution to ensure residents have access to healthy food, work with the Pittsburg County Health Department to expand healthy choices and decrease the area "food deserts" (defined by the USDA as "areas in which at least 500 people and/or at least 33 percent of the census tract's population must reside more than one mile from a supermarket or large grocery store"). (Refer to the USDA's Food Environment Atlas for more data about food access challenges: https://www.ers.usda.gov/FoodAtlas/).
    - The Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) is funded by the U.S. Department of Treasury, USDA, HHS, and private businesses to provide loans and grants, which will help pay for the construction of grocery stores, expansion of local farmers' markets, and refrigerators to enable convenience stores to offer fresh foods.
      - Raise awareness of available loans and grants so existing and potential vendors can utilize the funds.
      - Participate in the implementation of the Healthy Corner Store Initiative locally (https://www.nlc.org/resource/a-snapshot-of-healthy-corner-store-initiatives).
      - Address any obstacles in the zoning regulations to allow grocery stores and restaurants in locations that are a convenient walking and biking distance from neighborhoods and workplace districts. Focus particularly on high-need areas. (Note: Avoid encroachment of commercial development into neighborhoods that could erode the edges.)
  - Improve accessibility of the Pittsburg County Farmers' Market.
    - Support a more frequent Farmers' Market to respond to recent increase in demand. When held the first Saturday of each month, the market was well received with over 1,000 visitors at each event. The schedule has been expanded to three days per week between May and November. By maintaining a site in downtown as well as the frequency, the community can depend on easy access to fresh produce.
    - Continue acceptance of SNAP and WIC.
  - Encourage mobile solutions to bring healthy food choices closer to underserved portions of the population.

- Work with the Southern Branch of the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma to provide Mobile Eatery food trucks. The food bank distributes in McAlester approximately once a week. These food trucks expand the bank's reach by offering summer feeding for children, providing meals during grocery distributions, serving at senior centers and raising funds through events to give back to the Food Bank's programs." (https://okfoodbank.org/what-we-do/culinary-center/)
- Help local food vendors be part of the solution by allowing food trucks in more locations.
- Help local farmers by helping establish community-supported agriculture programs (CSAs), which also help area agricultural operations remain viable.
  - Continue efforts to distribute available food to those in need.
  - Partner with the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma to design and implement an enhanced program of food distribution.
  - Expand program of delivering leftovers (i.e., unused prepared foods from restaurants and grocery stores) to [need clarification on who is doing it, how, frequency, etc.].
  - Continue the McAlester Senior Citizen Nutrition Program.
- Increase local healthy food production.
  - Support community gardens and the McAlester Area Community Gardening Association. The City of McAlester, Pride in McAlester, and McAlester Public Schools joined forces to create a community garden on the south side of J.I. Stipe Recreation Center in 2014. This serves as a model for future gardens across in the City to produce food while educating citizens (including our youth) about growing healthy foods.
    - Consider neighborhood-managed community gardens in public spaces, provided guidelines are met. In addition to management, agreements between the City and neighborhood groups could address production targets to satisfy both neighborhood demand and for contributing to local food supply.
  - The City's Economic Development Department should work with entrepreneurs, Pittsburg Public Health, area institutions, and local growers to cultivate interest in the craft food industry. The craft food movement is gaining momentum, attracting entrepreneurs of all ages, especially those seeking a second career at retirement age. In addition to economic benefits, facilitating connections between local growers, culinary arts, and healthy food education can enhance local healthy food production efforts.
    - Upgrade and promote the kitchen at Expo Center, and/or create a kitchen incubator with a commercial-grade kitchen. Provide adequate space for entrepreneurs to test products, learn about running a business, and participating in increasing the supply of healthy foods for those in need locally.
- Increase participation in nutrition education by promoting the Community Nutrition Education Program (CNEP) offered by the Pittsburg County Cooperative Extension Service. The CNEP employs and educates the National Education Associations (NEAs) who work with local families to improve diet and manage resources. With or without more trained NEAs, facilitate assistance for neighborhood groups, not just individual or family education.

What makes a community more conducive to connections between residents and their community? **Aesthetics, social offerings, and openness.**

*Source: Melody Warnick, author of "This is Where You Belong: the Art and Science of Loving the Place You Live*

# 5 | APPENDICES

The Appendices include reports that were prepared during the course of the planning process.  The highlights of each have been summarized in the plan. Documents listed on this page are on file with the City of McAlester and available through the city's website.

## A: COMMUNITY INPUT

## B: EXISTING CONDITIONS

## C: MAPS

## D: IMPLEMENTATION

Comprehensive Plan

# APPENDIX A

## COMMUNITY INPUT

Public involvement is an important component of the Moving McAlester Forward. Activities focused on obtaining meaningful input from key stakeholders and general public to this date have included:

- Community Survey 1
- Stakeholder Member List
- Workshop 1 and Public Meeting - February 1, 2018
- Community Survey 2
- Workshop 2 and Public Meeting - June 28, 2018
- Community Event at Trick or Treat Party in the Street - October 22, 2018
- Workshop 3 and Public Meeting - December 11, 2018

*Community Responses can also be found in the City Assessment Report located in Appendix B

## A1. SURVEY 1 RESULTS

**I am a resident of the City of McAlester.**

True — 90.54%

False — 9.46%

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

*Total Responses: 814*
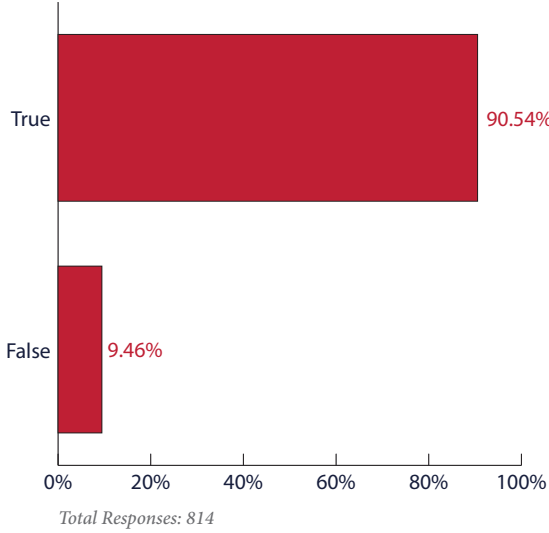
**I have lived in the City for:**

Less than 3 Years — 11.14%

3-10 Years — 18.73%

More than 10 Years — 62.79%

I don't live here — 7.34%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

*Total Responses: 817*
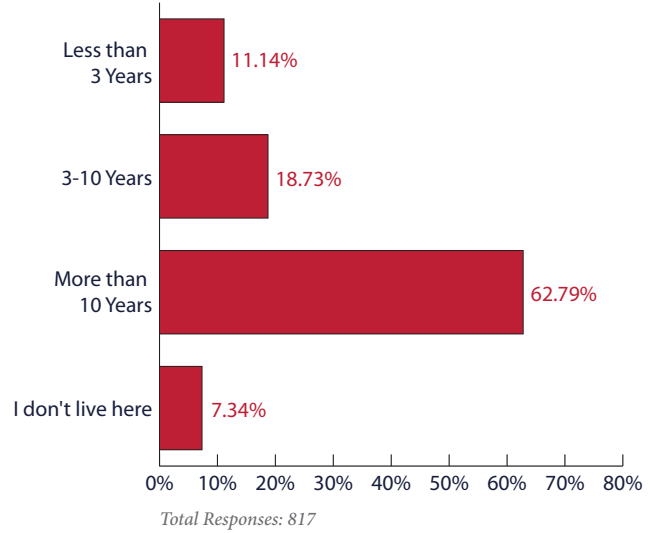
**I am an owner of property in the City.**

True — 65.16%

False — 34.84%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%
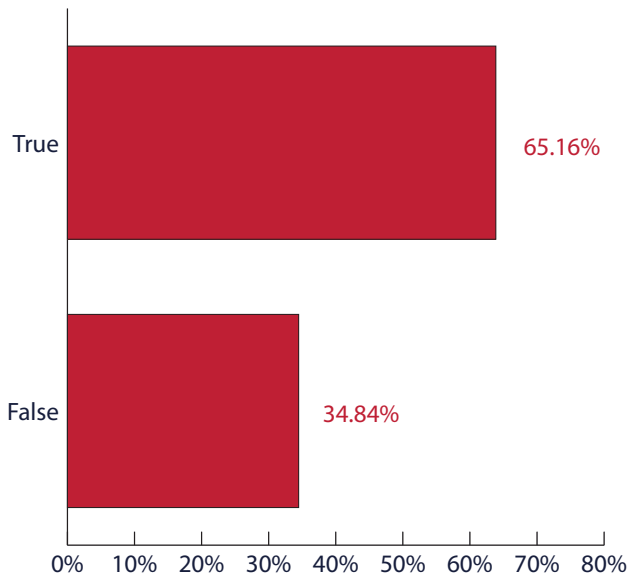
**I am an owner or manager of a business in the City.**

True — 22.87%

False — 77.13%

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

*Total Responses: 809*

## Some things I would like to see this plan address include the following (select 3):

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Mix of Uses | 9.68% |
| Scale, Intensity and Compatibility of New Development | 13.85% |
| More Resturants, Shopping and Entertainment | 74.14% |
| Open Space, Trees | 10.91% |
| Protecting the Environment | 14.58% |
| Jobs and Economic Development | 65.81% |
| Parks & Recreation Opportunities | 29.41% |
| Trails, Greenways | 21.69% |
| Protecting Historical Assets | 19.85% |
| Aesthetics, Quality of Development and Streetscape | 15.93% |
| Improve Ability to Walk/Bike to Destinations | 22.79% |
| Traffic, Roadway Congestion & Mobility | 32.84% |
| Transit Access | 9.19% |
| Managing Growth | 10.54% |
| Public Health, Safety | 20.10% |
| Housing Variety, Affordability | 29.78% |
| Other | 16.42% |

*Total Responses: 816*

## I would like to see my community develop over the next 20 years to include these (select 3):

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Subdivisions | 6.67% |
| Apartments or Condominiums | 13.46% |
| Townhouses | 11.48% |
| Senior Housing | 14.81% |
| Single Family Housing | 21.36% |
| Shopping, Retail Centers (Downtown) | 52.10% |
| Shopping, Retail Centers (US-69 Corridor) | 67.41% |
| Restaurants | 56.91% |
| Entertainment Uses | 50.62% |
| Office and Professional Services | 8.27% |
| Services, Including Medical | 19.63% |
| Mixed Use Development (Live/Work/Shop in one Location) | 18.27% |
| Light Industrial Uses, Warehousing, Distribution | 19.88% |
| Heavy Industrial Uses, Manufacturing | 24.94% |
| Civic and Institutional Uses (i.e., Schools) | 18.02% |
| Recreation | 36.67% |
| I would not like to see my community develop | 3.46% |

*Total Responses: 810*

**Which Vision for the City statements from the McAlester Comprehensive Plan (1996-2006) are still relevant for today (select 3):**

| Statement | % |
|---|---|
| Provide a framework for sustainable community development to ensure proper growth management | 28.44% |
| Assure economic development in McAlester will enhance and enrich the quality of life | 51.80% |
| Develop a central business district which finacially benefits the citizens of McAlester and the surrounding trade area | 33.51% |
| Evaluate housing and establish a method to ensure safe, healthy, communities served by all public utilities and have connectivity to public facilities and commercial areas | 28.70% |
| Provide will designed and maintained transportation in which safety and ease of movement for all McAlester | 27.64% |
| Provide and plan for public utilities; allow for growth; promoteand attract economic development; and encourage efficient use of land and fiscal resources | 35.25% |
| Provide land area, facilities and activities to service the recreation needs of McAlester | 23.90% |
| Provide sufficient land area and facilities to serve the education and cultural needs of all persons in the community and assure that facilities are conveniently accessable | 17.49% |
| Provide a complete range of public services to the community | 24.57% |
| Implement the comprehensive plan as a working document to guide the future growth and development of McAlester | 28.84% |

*Total Responses: 749*

**When I have free time I like to go to:**

| | % |
|---|---|
| Downtown | 31.44% |
| Northtown (Old McAlester) | 20.35% |
| Local Parks | 29.10% |
| Lake Eufaula | 33.91% |
| Cities Within - One-Hour Drive | 43.40% |
| Cities Further - One-Hour Drive | 55.61% |
| Choctaw Casino | 9.86% |
| Other | 14.80% |
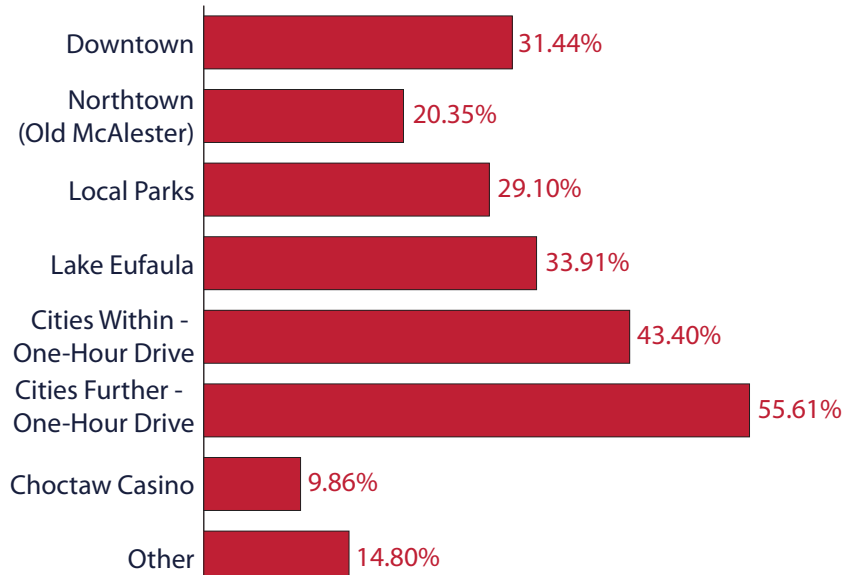
**Question 9: If I could keep one thing about McAlester (and its surroundings), it would be:**

1. McAlester's history and its corresponding historical assets (71 mentions)
2. Downtown and Old/North Town (68 combined mentions)
3. McAlester's Parks (57 mentions)

**Question 10: If I could change one thing about McAlester (and its surroundings), it would be:**

1. Economic issues such as lack of shopping (106 mentions), restaurants (64 mentions), jobs (37 mentions), and entertainment options (32 mentions)
2. Transportation issues - roads and streets (132 combined mentions)

**Questions 11: My big idea(s):**

1. The addition of a mall to McAlester (55 mentions)
2. A desire for shopping options ranging from Target to Hobby Lobby along with various restaurants
3. Concerns regarding jobs (43 mentions)

## A2. STAKE HOLDER MEMBERS

**MOVING**
**McALESTER**
**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

### McAlester Stakeholder Members

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Zach Prichard | 32. Robert Vaughn |
| 2. Adam Gronwald | 33. Dale Burk |
| 3. Charlie Rogers | 34. Chad Donnelley |
| 4. Taryn Grippando | 35. Brenda Baxter |
| 5. Justin Crawford | 36. David Beale |
| 6. Kelli Wall | 37. Billy Sumner |
| 7. Cody Knight | 38. Eddie Grey |
| 8. Rodney Canterbury | 39. Stephanie Holt |
| 9. Kristy Balch | 40. Robin Woodley |
| 10. Richard Evans | 41. Stephanie Giacomo |
| 11. Damon Mascoto | 42. Christy Hermsmeyer |
| 12. Brent Case | 43. Mike Echelle |
| 13. Vic Wheeler | 44. Rachel Lockwood |
| 14. Sayer Brenner | 45. Gary Wansick |
| 15. Kirk Ridenour | 46. Brett Brewer |
| 16. Jayme Clifton | 47. Kevin Enloe |
| 17. RaShonda Hutchings | 48. Chelsey Bishop |
| 18. Chad Gragg | 49. Shawn Smith |
| 19. Cliff House | 50. Sandra Hensley |
| 20. Angela Evans | 51. Melissa Lock |
| 21. Ray Wilson | 52. Whitney Hall |
| 22. Ann Brooks | 53. Michelle Mabry |
| 23. Kathy McGilberry | 54. Scott Walker |
| 24. Julie Horton | 55. Jessica Gregg |
| 25. Ed Grey | 56. Bob Bahe |
| 26. Dalton Carlton | 57. Cara Bland |
| 27. Timmy Don Adams | 58. Pam Pulchney |
| 28. Toni Evin | 59. Aaron Heathcock |
| 29. Frank Phillips | 60. Danny Giacomo |
| 30. Sam Magdalena | 61. Jim Kelly |
| 31. Kyle Spruce | 62. Shannon Snelling |

# A3. INTERACTIVE STICKER MAP RESULTS (FROM PUBLIC MEETING NO.1)



LEGEND

Comment

- Apartments
- Bike Lane
- Community Garden
- Community Space
- Downtown Center
- Entertainment
- Favorite Place
- Gateway
- Improve Traffic
- Library
- Mixed-Use
- Neighborhood Center
- Office
- Parks
- Ped/Bike Hazard
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Public Art
- Restaurant
- Retail
- Services
- Sidewalk
- Slow Traffic
- Storm Water Improvement
- Street Lights
- Trail
- Transit Stop
- Destination
- Parking
- Residence

# A4. SURVEY 2 RESULTS

**I would spend more of my free time in McAlester instead of other cities and towns if _____ (fill in the blank).**

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**163** Responses | Better Shopping, Shopping Options, and Stores

**135** Responses | Restaurants

**69** Responses | Entertainment

*Total Responses: 691*

**Which parks and public open spaces need improvement, and why?**

*The following summarizes the key responses to this question:*

✓ Parks are generally described as being in good condition, especially Chadick Park

✓ Public Pools were identified as being an area of the city's public space that could be improved

✓ Mike Deak was described as being a good park, but respondents frequently mentioned more lights and a repaved track as being needed

*Total Responses: 691*

**Give an example of the types of entertainment you would like to see in McAlester.**

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**251** Responses | Concerts/Music

**124** Responses | Family/Kid Friendly Activities (i.e. Fairs, Laser Tag, Paintball, Go-Carts)

**54** Responses | Water Park

*Total Responses: 691*

**Which of the following statements is true?**

| Statement | Percentage |
|---|---|
| I only shop when I need something. | 26% |
| I like to shop, and sometimes I shop just to get out of the house. | 57% |
| I do most of my shopping online. | 17% |

## What would make McAlester a healthier place to live (Choose all that apply) ?

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| More Trails, Better-Developed Greenways, More Places to Walk Safely | 54% |
| Developmental Design That Supports Walkability and Healthier, Active Lifestyles | 42% |
| Sidewalks Accessible for those who are Disabled | 35% |
| More Bike Paths/Lanes | 32% |
| More Parks | 22% |
| Organized Sports | 25% |
| Places to just be Outside in Nature | 45% |
| More Activities for Seniors | 24% |
| More Opportunities for Social Interaction | 47% |
| Easier Access to Healthcare, Especially Mental Health | 26% |
| Easier Access to Healthier Food | 42% |
| Less Crime | 42% |
| Higher Wages | 56% |
| Other | 17% |

*Total Responses: 691*

### Name one specific suggestion you have for improving downtown.

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**259** Responses — Businesses (Shops, Store, Restaurants)

**70** Responses — Street Improvements

**43** Responses — Parking

*Total Responses: 691*

### Which roads are in most need of improvement/repair?

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**68** Responses — Electric Ave.

**44** Responses — Carl Albert

**17** Responses — Washington

**15** Responses — Highway 69

**\*** Responses — "All of them" and variations of this response were very common responses
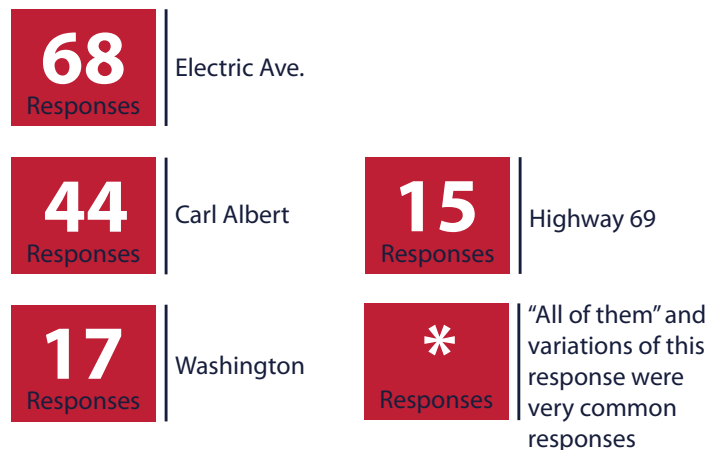
## What type of jobs do you think are most important for McAlester to attract in the future?

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**203** Responses — Manufacturing/Industry

**94** Responses — Retail and Restaurants

**19** Responses — Health Care

*Total Responses: 691*

## What does McAlester need in order to attract those jobs? (Choose all that apply)

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Better Broadband Access | 32% |
| More Housing Options | 41% |
| More Amenities and Things To-Do | 81% |
| Other | 35% |
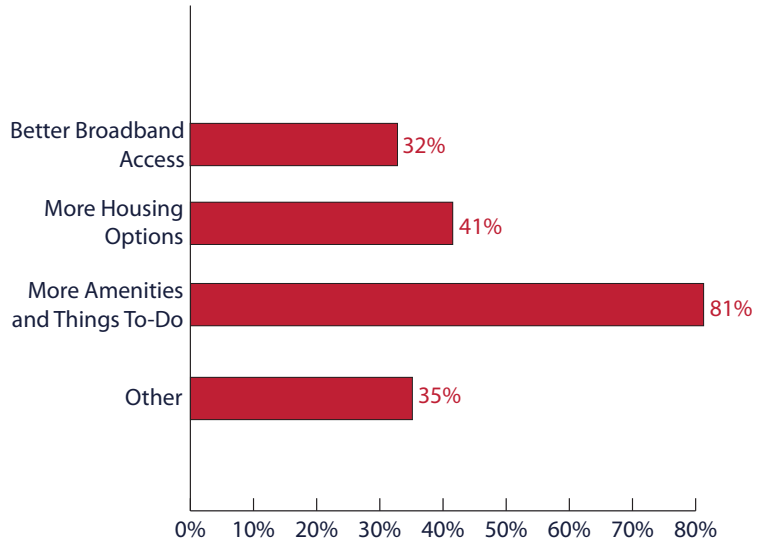
*Total Responses: 691*

## Which historic sites and structures are worthy of preservation?

*The following are the most commonly mentioned responses:*

**63** Responses — Downtown

**55** Responses — Old High School

**49** Responses — Old Town

**37** Responses — Okla Theater

*Total Responses: 691*

## What features of McAlester are you most proud of and would want to share with a friend or family member visiting from out of town?

*The following summarizes the key responses to this question:*

✓ "Not much" and variations of this idea were very frequent responses

✓ The downtown and restaurants, specifically Italian, were commonly mentioned

✓ Respondents also regularly cited parks as being something they would like to share

*Total Responses: 691*

## A5. KEY FINDINGS (FROM SURVEY NO. 2)

**Key Findings**

**1** **Leveraging Downtown.**
Respondents frequently expressed that Downtown was very important to the identity of McAlester and will continue being essential to its future growth and development. The addition of a music/concert venue was recurrently suggested, and could be a potential addition to further improve the already significant downtown area.

**Key Findings**

**2** **Increasing Economic Options.**
Respondents were repeatedly asking for increased shopping, restaurants and entertainment amenities. Focusing on attracting more of these types of amenities should be considered highly important.

**Key Findings**

**3** **Manufacturing and Industrial Jobs are Viewed as the Future.**
Respondents conveyed that manufacturing and industrial jobs were far and away the most important sector to attract jobs to McAlester in the future.

**Key Findings**

**4** **Transportation Improvements.**
Respondents communicated a major need for road improvements across McAlester. Responses regarding infrastructure improvements were commonplace, with a need for greater pedestrian and biking options also being mentioned.

**Key Findings**

**5** **Recreational Assets.**
Respondents comments were very positive with regards to the city's parks, specifically Chadick Park and Mike Deak Park, denoting their important roles to play as recreational cornerstones.

## A6. PUBLIC EVENT SURVEY AT TRICK OR TREAT PARTY IN THE STREET

### EXISTING DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE



*Community Responses:*

*"fix our roads"*
*"business SW of 2nd and Choctaw"*
*"housing"*
*"extend the zoning"*
*"develop better sidewalks and crosswalks"*

### INVESTMENT IN CENTERS



*Community Responses:*

*"greenspace, walkability"*
*"make 'centers' a great place to work"*
*"a 'Town Green' needs to be in central part of town"*

### QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE



*Community Responses:*

*"things to do - splashpad, golf, basketball, N-S trails through city, bike trails/lanes"*
*"a park similar to Wintersmith Park in Ada would be amazing"*
*"music"*

## TOP 3 KEY INPUT TOPICS

MOVING McALESTER FORWARD PLAN 2040

Growth where utilities currently are located



Existing roads & sidewalks are repaired



City gateways & wayfinding
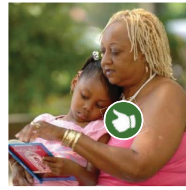


Multi-generational neighborhoods



Variety of affordable housing options



Improve existing parks and trails



Improve existing systems and facilities
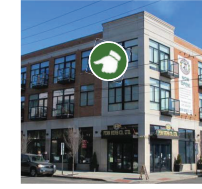


Mixed-use development (jobs, shopping, dining, and living)



"Active transportation" through walking and biking



Highlight neighborhood characteristics & identity



Increase home ownership



Connective system of parks and trails

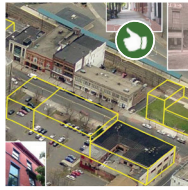

Public amenities are enhanced and maintained
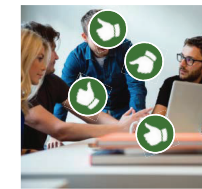


Attract young entrepreneurs for economic development



Locations for higher density residential development



Living options close to work



Housing with lifestyle preferences



Active recreational space

## What feature would you like to see for McAlester?

MOVING McALESTER FORWARD PLAN 2040



Passive recreational space



Link cultural destinations, historical assets, etc.



Foster healthy living environments



Repave existing streets



Supporting commercial development allowed



Downtown is the heart of the community



Programmable open space



Neighborhoods with natural open space amenities
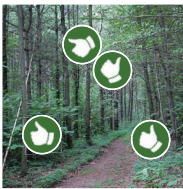


Conservation areas to control development locations



Complete streets are apart of connected road network
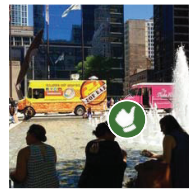


Make employment locations more appealing to workers



Downtown is main location for civic & community events



Trails for recreation and transportation
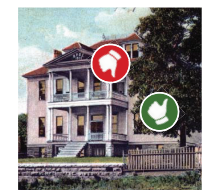


Preserve historical and cultural assets



Avoid agriculture encroachment



Transit service is facilitated by the development pattern
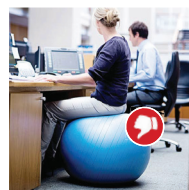


Create design principles for healthy work places



Priority investment for public & private sectors Downtown

Put back a crossway in front of Walmart. Too dangerous turning back around in front of ford fredom

Family Parks and Activities

More shopping choices so tax dollars are spent here . not in neighboring cities and towns

More Stuff for Kids

Allow all Public Schools to have educational livestock barns.

Youth Activities

Additional family shelter

Water Park

Comprehensive Plan

# APPENDIX B

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

The information in Appendix B was presented to the Stakeholders and the Public as part of the first Public Meeting. The information was compiled as an assessment of existing conditions in McAlester, known as the Community Assessment Report.

- City Accessment Report
- SWOT

## B1. CITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

# TRANSPORTATION

### MCALESTER'S COMMUTE

**16.5 MINUTES**
AVERAGE WORK COMMUTE

**83.4%**
OF WORKERS
DRIVE ALONE

**12.5%**
CARPOOL

**1.7%**
WORK AT
HOME

**0.3%**
TRANSIT

**2.1%**
OTHER

NW Pittsburg County
Krebs, OK
Alderson, OK
Haileyville, OK
Savanna, OK
Tulsa-Bartlesville Area
Oklahoma
McAlester, OK

0%   25%   50%   75%   100%

**76.0%**
WORK & LIVE IN SAME
CITY

*SOURCE: ACS 2010 – 2014

### WORKFLOW PATTERNS

**6,352**
People live outside
of the city and work
within the city

**3,213**
People live
and work
in the city

**3,141**
People live in the
city and work out-
side of the city*

*Outflow worker migration can be in part due to a large ammunition plant located outside of the City in the County.

### TRANSPORTATION TRENDS

Using averages, employees in McAlester, OK have a shorter commute time (16.5 minutes) than the normal US worker (24.8 minutes). Additionally, 2.78% of the workforce in McAlester, OK have "super commutes" in excess of 90 minutes.

**$14,342**
AVERAGE ANNUAL
TRANSPORTATION
COSTS
PER HOUSEHOLD

**2**
AVERAGE NUMBER
OF AUTOMOBILES
PER HOUSEHOLD

**25,784**
AVERAGE
HOUSEHOLD
VEHICLE MILES
TRAVELED PER YEAR

*SOURCE: ACS 2010-2014 & FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

#### Did you know?

*A second ODOT project is scheduled for federal fiscal year 2019. ODOT will reconstruct US-69 from Kinkead Rd. to Peaceable Ave. including the north and southbound frontage roads and will construct an interchange at Kinkead Rd.*

SOURCE: ODOT

KEY
Local Roads
Highways
City Limits
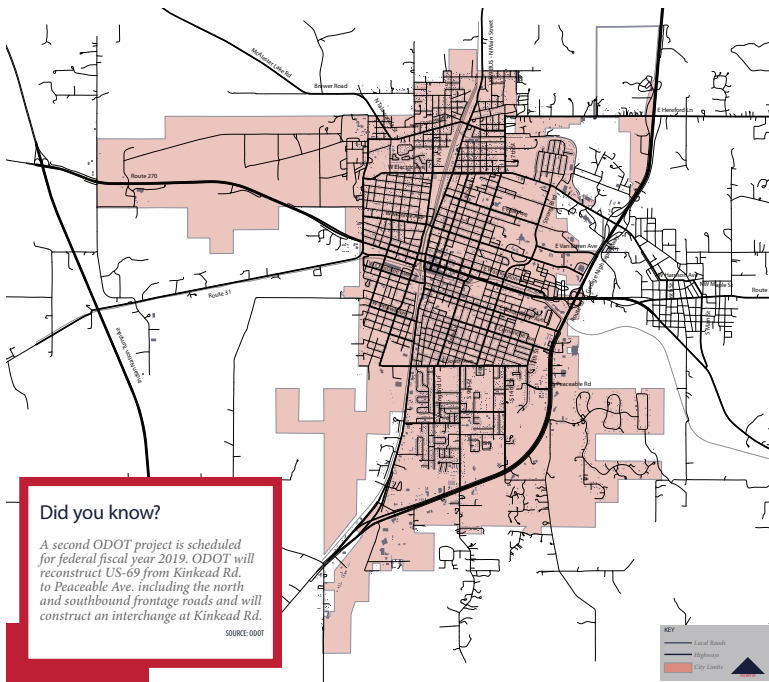
### ROADWAY PROJECTS

**About the Project**
- $13 million contract
- Work started February 2017 and is expected to be completed in March 2018

**Work Includes**
- Widening the US-69 bridges over Wade Watts Ave. and the Arkansas-Oklahoma Railroad
- Construction of on and off-ramps from US-69 to the frontage roads near Wade Watts Ave. north of Comanche Ave.
- Adding a J-turn on US-69 on the northbound frontage road between Peaceable Rd. and Kinkead Rd. This is a temporary construction that will allow access across US-69 from the frontage roads in this area as access at Peaceable Rd. and Comanche Rd will be closed. This will be replaced in a future reconstruction project by a permanent turn around
- Removing the signalized light at Peaceable Rd. and Comanche Rd. and permanently closing direct access to these roads from US-69
- A complete overlay and re-striping of the frontage roads from Kinkead Rd. to Peaceable Rd. to make them one-way.

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

Comprehensive Plan

# UTILITIES

## Most Common Used House Heating Fuel:



- 2%
- 40%
- 58%

■ Utility Gas  ■ Electricity  ■ Bottled, Tank, or LP Gas
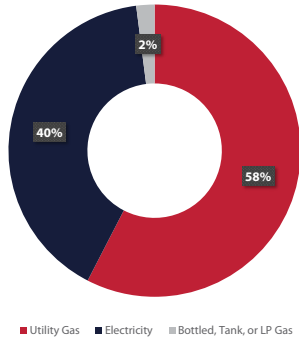
## UTILITY MAINTENANCE

The Utility Maintenance branch of the Utilities Department is responsible for maintaining 170 miles of water line and 143 miles of sewer line. These crews are responsible for different repairs and maintenance around the City, which include the following services that are provided for the City of McAlester residents:

- Repair of water breaks on public properties
- Relocation of water meters and service lines
- Investigation of low water pressure
- Fire hydrant repair, replacement, and preventive maintenance
- Investigation of sanitary sewer odors
- Smoke testing and removal of sanitary sewer blockages and overflows
- Cleaning and repairing of sanitary sewer lines
- Restoration of public and private property after repair of water and sewer lines
- Installation of new city water meters
- Locating city water and sewer lines for Oklahoma One Call System

## WATER UTILITY MAP
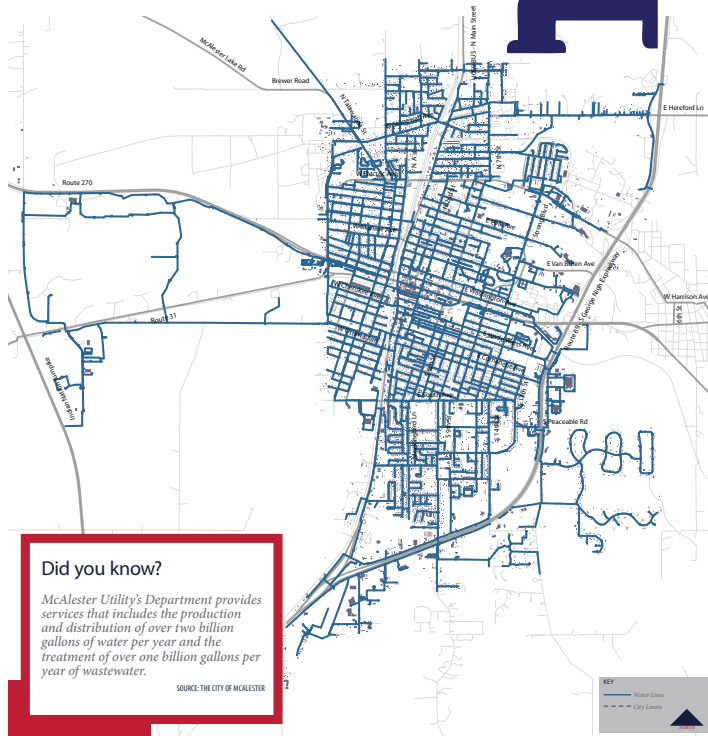


### Did you know?

*McAlester Utility's Department provides services that includes the production and distribution of over two billion gallons of water per year and the treatment of over one billion gallons per year of wastewater.*

SOURCE: THE CITY OF MCALESTER

KEY
— Water Lines
--- City Limits

## SANITARY & STORM SEWER UTILITY MAP
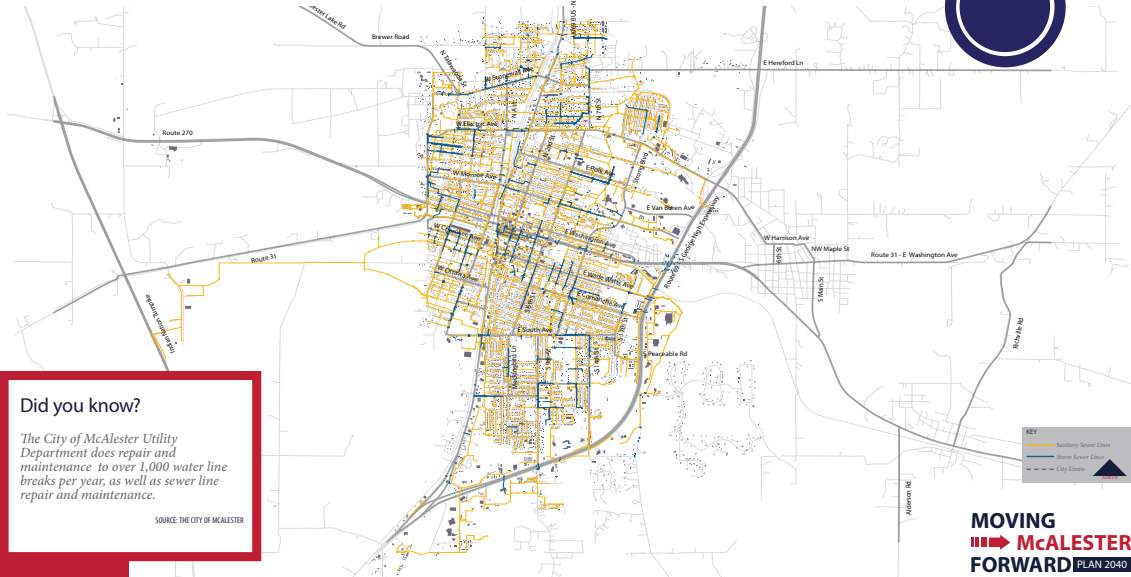


### Did you know?

*The City of McAlester Utility Department does repair and maintenance to over 1,000 water line breaks per year, as well as sewer line repair and maintenance.*

SOURCE: THE CITY OF MCALESTER

KEY
— Sanitary Sewer Lines
— Storm Sewer Lines
--- City Limits

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# TRANSPORTATION, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, UTILITIES

What changes would you make to transportation, emergency response, and utilities?

**Community Responses:**

- Bike paths & bike sharing spaces
- Preservation of our natural resources
- Improving our utilities
    - New water plant, new lines, updated systems
    - Look into underground utilities for old town and downtown
- Lower speed limits
- Create a connected network of sidewalks and bike lanes
    - Bike paths that connect all over the city
- Natural stormwater drainage systems
    - Natural stormwater control
- Less cement use
- Traffic calming elements and strategies
- Better lighting on the streets
    - Lights on the trails

- More emergency lanes for our first responders
- Major employer's transportation to x2
- Public transportation – possibly a trolley
- More access to healthy food
- More access to medical care
- Safe routes to schools and parks
    - Make it easier to walk or bike to work/ school
- Traffic congestion is a non-issue
- Make is harder to drive in places we want to be walkable

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**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

# COMMUNITY HEALTH AND CHARACTER

**52** % of survey respondents that selected this goal from the previous plan as still relevant today:

"Assure economic development in McAlester will enhance and enrich the quality of life."

## HEALTH

**MCALESTER**

**UNITED STATES**

**10,786**
Premature deaths
(3-year average
2012-2014)

**6,601**
Premature deaths
(3-year average
2012-2014)

**116**
Average injury
deaths per year
(2011-2015)

**53**
Average injury
deaths per year
(2011-2015)

**60**
Preventable
hospital stays
(2014)

**36**
Preventable
hospital stays
(2014)

**45%**
Access to activity

**91%**
Access to activity

## TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION PROFILE

Tapestry segmentation data is provided by the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) which "provides an accurate, detailed description of America's neighborhoods—U.S. residential areas are divided into 67 distinctive segments based on their socioeconomic and demographic composition—then further classifies the segments into LifeMode."

Life Mode definitions are provided below. Based on the data, most residents of McAlester are within the **Hometown Life Mode**. Generally, these people grow up and stay close to home because they value family and community.

## LIFE MODE

Researchers are demonstrating the positive effects of nature on blood pressure, cholesterol, outlook on life, and stress reduction. Spending time in nature is linked to longevity and decreased risk of mental illness.

US Dept of Agriculture

|  | Population | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| GenXUrban | 2,541 | 17.9% |
| Cozy Country Living | 2,953 | 20.8% |
| Rustic Outposts | 527 | 3.7% |
| Hometown | 6,423 | 45.2% |
| Unclassified | 1,775 | 12.5% |

**37** % of survey respondents that would like to have more opportunities for recreation.

### GENXURBAN

- Gen X in middle age; families with fewer kids and a mortgage
- Gen X married couples, and a growing population of retirees
- About a fifth of residents are 65 or older; about a fourth of households have retirement income
- Own older single-family homes in urban areas, with 1 or 2 vehicles
- Live and work in the same county, creating shorter commute times

**17.9%**
Of population

### COZY COUNTRY LIVING

- Empty nesters in bucolic settings
- Largest Tapestry group, almost half of households located in the Midwest
- Homeowners with pets, residing in single-family dwellings in rural areas; almost 30% have 3 or more vehicles and, therefore, auto loans
- Politically conservative and believe in the importance of buying American
- Own domestic trucks, motorcycles, and ATVs/UTVs

**20.8%**
Of population

### RUSTIC OUTPOSTS

- Country life with older families in older homes
- Rustic Outposts depend on manufacturing, retail and healthcare, with pockets of mining and agricultural jobs
- Low labor force participation in skilled and service occupations
- Own affordable, older single-family or mobile homes; vehicle ownership, a must

**3.7%**
Of population
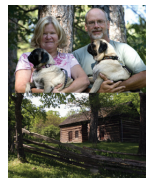
### HOMETOWN

- Growing up and staying close to home; single householders
- Close knit urban communities of young singles (many with children)
- Owners of old, single-family houses, or renters in small multi-unit buildings
- Religion is the cornerstone of many of these communities
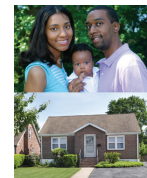
**45.2%**
Of population

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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# DEMOGRAPHICS

## POPULATION GROWTH

From of 18,383 in 2010 to a population of 18,271 in 2016, the population of McAlester decreased by an overall -.5%. Figure 1 illustrates the slight decrease in population.

**MCALESTER POPULATION 2010-2016**
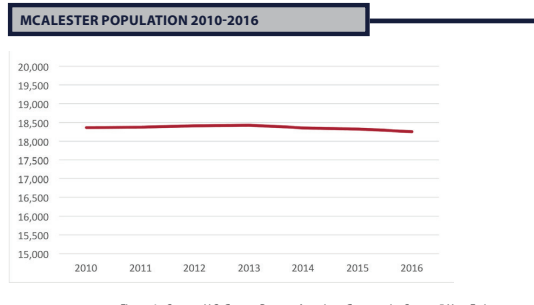


Figure 1 - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

## POPULATION PROJECTIONS

McAlester is located within Pittsburg County. By 2040, the population of Pittsburg County is projected to increase by 5,880 residents, a 12.8% increase over 30 years.

**PITTSBURG COUNTY 2010-2040**
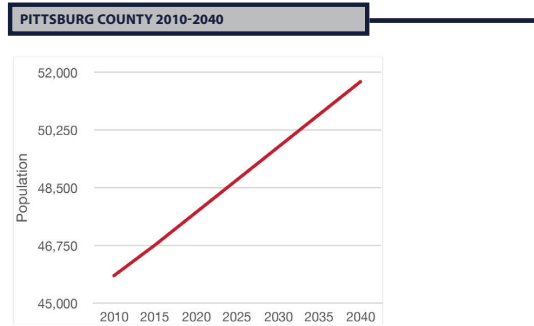


Figure 2 - Source: 2012 Oklahoma State and County Population Projection through 2075

## POPULATION GROWTH SINCE 1900

In 110 years, the population of McAlester has grown from 646 to 18,383.

**POPULATION GROWTH 1900-2010**



Figure 3 - Source: http://population.us/ok/mcalester/

### AGE & POVERTY

|  | MCALESTER | OKLAHOMA | UNITED STATES |
|---|---|---|---|
| Median Age | **37** | **36.2** | **37.8** |
| Persons below poverty line | **23%** | **16.1%** | **14.7%** |
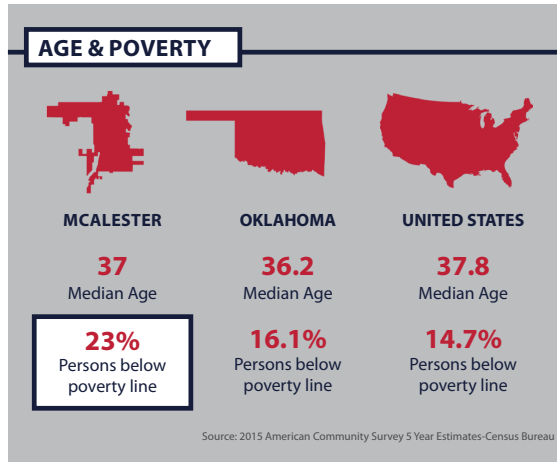
Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates-Census Bureau

## GROWTH RATE COMPARISON 2010-2016
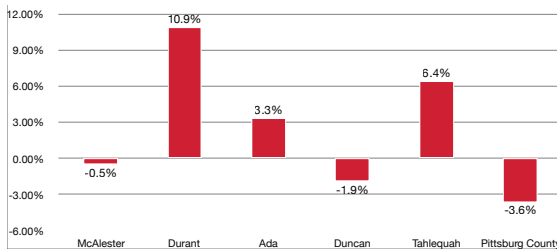


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), Updated annually

Source: http://www.oklahomaopportunities.com/mcalester/

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# HOUSING

## HOUSEHOLDS



**MCALESTER**

**$41,112**
Median Income

**2.39**
Persons per household

**OKLAHOMA**

**$46,879**
Median Income

**2.58**
Persons per household

**UNITED STATES**

**$53,889**
Median Income

**2.64**
Persons per household
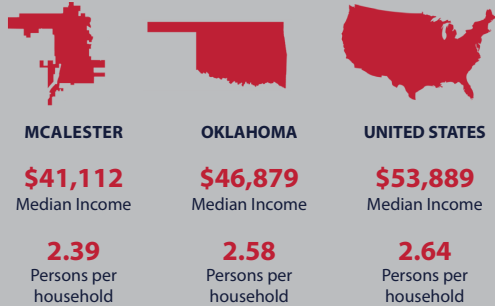
Source: 2015 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates-Census Bureau

## HOUSING UNITS

**8,685**
HOUSING UNITS

**$102,400**
MEDIAN HOME VALUE

OKLAHOMA **$121,400**
UNITED STATES **$184,700**

**83%**
SINGLE UNIT

**15%**
VACANCY RATE

### OWN VS RENT

40% RENT

60% OWN

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program (PEP), Updated annually
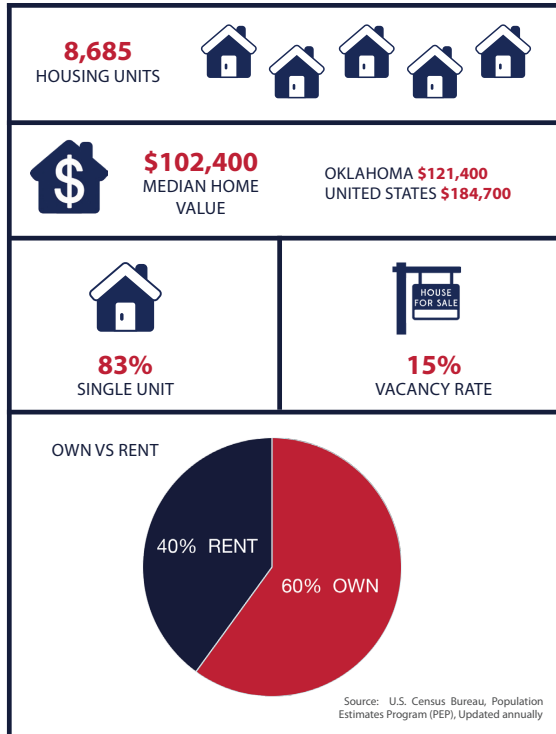
## SURVEY COMMENTS

Survey respondents indicated a desire for more shopping, dining, entertainment, and recreation options.

**52%** Shopping Downtown

**67%** Shopping, Retail Centers

**57%** Restaurants

**51%** Entertainment

**37%** Recreation

**I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MY COMMUNITY DEVELOP OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS TO INCLUDE THESE: (SELECT 3)**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Single family houses | 21.36% |
| Subdivisions | 6.67% |
| Apartments or condominiums | 13.46% |
| Townhomes | 11.48% |
| Senior housing | 14.81% |
| Other housing types | 5.93% |
| Shopping, retail centers (Downtown) | 52.1% |
| Restaurants | 67.41% |
| Entertainment uses | 56.91% |
| Office and professional services | 50.62% |
| Services, including medical | 8.27% |
| Mixed use developments | 19.63% |
| Light industrial uses, warehousing, distribution | 18.27% |
| Heavy industrial uses, manufacturing | 19.88% |
| Civic and institutional uses | 24.94% |
| Recreation | 18.02% |
| I would not like to see my community developed | 36.67% |
| | 3.46% |

Source: https://realtor.com

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## COMMUNITY PROFILE, DEMOGRAPHICS, HOUSING

What kinds of housing are needed in McAlester?

**Community Responses:**

- Mixed Use
    - Mixed use zoning
- Smaller lot sizes to help with lower income renters
    - Lower or no minimum lot size
- Tiny Houses
- Loft living downtown
    - Studio living (not low income)
- Market rate apartments (non-subsidized)
- Active adults & senior living communities
- Infill
- Parks around homes
- Connected communities

Where would you like to see new or renovated housing?

**Community Responses:**

- Ward 3
- Ward 1
- Near parks and schools
- Cultivate sustainable communities (work & play communities)
- Downtown/Old Town
    - Homes within walking distance of downtown
- More renovations than new homes preferred
- Transition areas
- Smoke free multi-unit housing
- North of Carl Albert & west of Ash (many home renovation opportunities here)

**MOVING**
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**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

# LOCAL ECONOMY

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The labor force for the County is 7,133 employees, up 1% from the prior year; with an unemployment rate 6.2%. The unemployment rate for McAlester is just slightly higher than the 6.0% unemployment rate for Oklahoma. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

### EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR IN 2015

Source: https://datausa.io/profile/geo/mcalester-ok/

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MANAGEMENT **7.2%** | BUSINESS & FINANCIAL **3.4%** | HEALTH TECHNICIANS **2.8%** | ADMINISTRATIVE **13.6%** | SALES **9%** | PRODUCTION **7.8%** |
| | | HEALTH PRACTITIONERS **1.9%** | | | |
| EDUCATION, TRAINING & LIBRARY **4.9%** | COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICE **3.5%** | LEGAL **1.1%** / ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING **3.4%** | | | TRANSPORTATION **3.5%** |
| | | ARTS & RECREATION **0.7%** | | | MATERIAL MOVING **3%** |
| FOOD & SERVING **8.7%** | CLEANING & MAINTENANCE **5.1%** | PERSONAL CARE & SERVICE **2.6%** | | | |
| | FIRE FIGHTING SUPERVISORS **2.1%** / LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPERVISORS **2.1%** | HEALTHCARE **2.3%** | CONSTRUCTION & EXTRACTION **7.9%** | INSTALLATION, MAINTENANCE & REPAIR **1.9%** | FARMING, FISHING & FORESTRY **0.9%** |

### WORKER MIGRATION 2015

Source: https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/ok

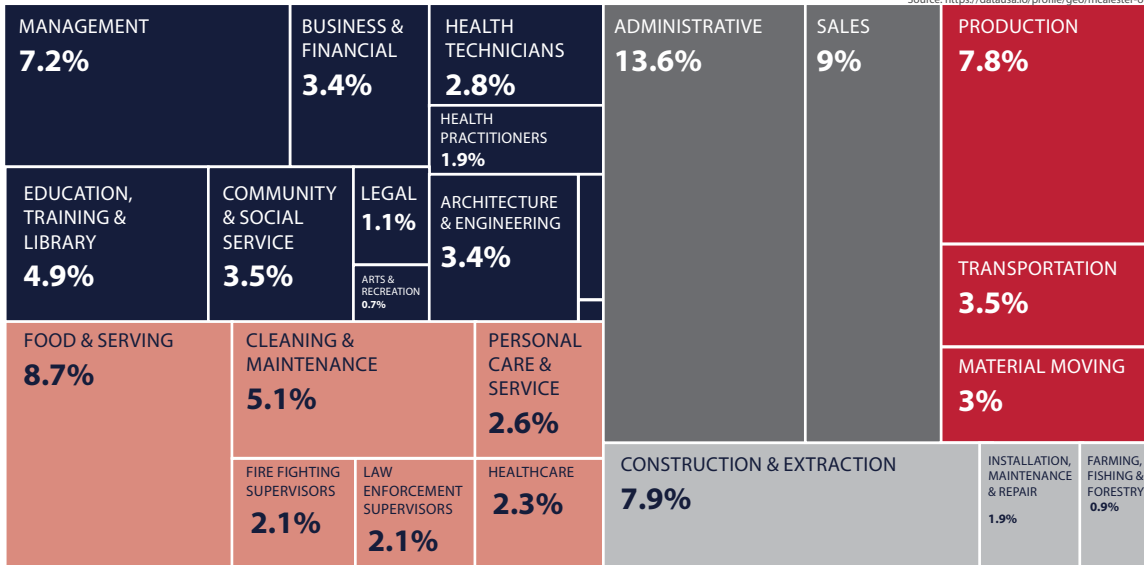| | INTERNAL | | INFLOW | | OUTFLOW | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Count | Share | Count | Share | Count | Share |
| Internal Jobs Filled by Residents | 3,213 | 100.00% | 6,352 | 100.00% | 3,141 | 100.00% |
| **Age** | | | | | | |
| Workers Aged 29 or younger | 783 | 24.40% | 1,536 | 24.20% | 812 | 25.90% |
| Workers Aged 30 to 54 | 1,718 | 53.50% | 3,463 | 54.50% | 1,670 | 53.20% |
| Workers Aged 55 or older | 712 | 22.20% | 1,353 | 21.30% | 659 | 21.00% |
| **Earnings** | | | | | | |
| $1,250 per month or less | 920 | 28.60% | 1,705 | 26.80% | 801 | 25.50% |
| $1,251 to $3,333 per month | 1,489 | 46.30% | 2,815 | 44.30% | 1,243 | 39.60% |
| $3,333 per month | 804 | 25.00% | 1,832 | 28.80% | 1,097 | 34.90% |
| **Industry** | | | | | | |
| Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry Class | 363 | 11.30% | 906 | 14.30% | 741 | 23.60% |
| Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry Class | 517 | 16.10% | 1,417 | 22.30% | 678 | 21.60% |
| Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry Class | 2,333 | 72.60% | 4,029 | 63.40% | 1,722 | 54.80% |

### MAJOR EMPLOYERS



MCALESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS



MCALESTER ARMY AMMUNITION



MCALESTER REGIONAL HEALTH



NATIONAL OILWELL VARCO INC.



OKLAHOMA STATE PENITENTIARY



SPIRIT AEROSTRUCTURES



CHOCTAW DEFENSE

https://livability.com/ok/mcalester/business/top-employers-in-mcalester-ok

### WORKER MIGRATION 2015

| | Count | Share |
|---|---|---|
| Employed in the City | 9,565 | 100.00% |
| Living in the City | 6,354 | 66.40% |
| Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-) | 3,211 | - |

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

# LOCAL ECONOMY

## TOP 5 INDUSTRIES


HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE


PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION


MANUFACTURING


RETAIL TRADE


ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES

## INDUSTRY CHARACTERISTICS

| Industry | Total | Percent of Total |
|---|---|---|
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over | 7,317 | |
| Health care and social assistance | 1,053 | 14.39% |
| Public administration | 978 | 13.37% |
| Manufacturing | 825 | 11.28% |
| Retail trade | 795 | 10.87% |
| Accommodation and food services | 785 | 10.73% |
| Educational services | 455 | 6.22% |
| Construction | 425 | 5.81% |
| Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction | 286 | 3.91% |
| Wholesale trade | 247 | 3.38% |
| Other services, except public administration | 236 | 3.23% |
| Administrative and support and waste management services | 201 | 2.75% |
| Finance and insurance | 195 | 2.67% |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 157 | 2.15% |
| Transportation and warehousing | 138 | 1.89% |
| Information | 137 | 1.87% |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 136 | 1.86% |
| Utilities | 114 | 1.56% |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 96 | 1.31% |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting | 58 | 0.79% |

Source: 2012-2016 ACS 5 Year Estimates-Industry by Sex for Civilian Employed Population 16 years and Older

## TOTAL NUMBER OF WORKERS IN EACH INDUSTRY CATEGORY
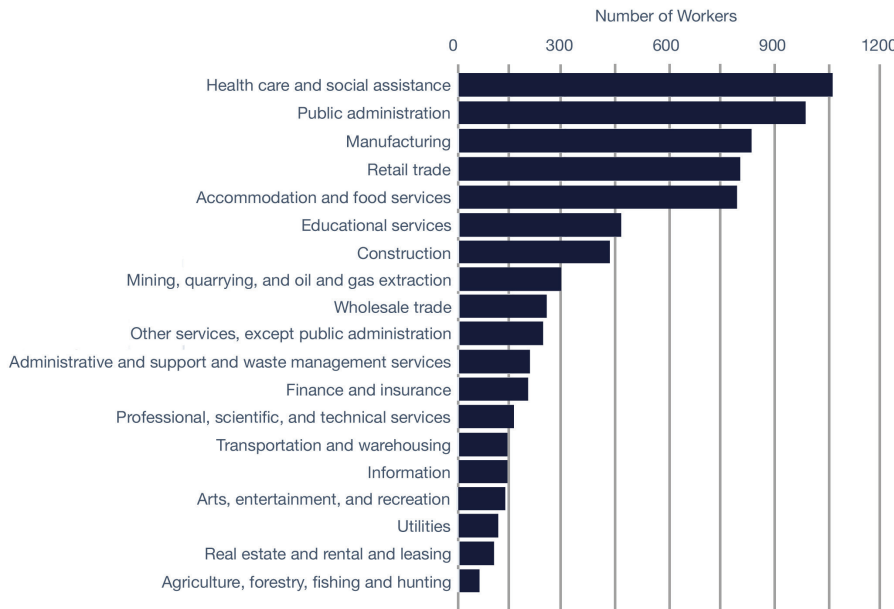
Number of Workers



Source: 2012-2016 ACS 5 Year Estimates-Industry by Sex for Civilian Employed Population 16 years and Older







**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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# LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

How can McAlester diversify its economy and continue to grow in a responsible fashion?

**Community Responses:**

- Needs better shopping and entertainment for young families
- Better rental properties and landlords
    - More rentals for people testing the community
- Focus on nurturing the community – make it great again
- Market our assets
- Focus on place and aesthetics
- Food business development/ kitchen incubator
- Improve quality of life – through more shopping & entertainment choices
- Economic gardening
- Support local non-profits (align & foster)
- Small business development/incubator
- Integrate youth in meaningful ways
- Support growth of current businesses
- Develop trade/skill labor
- Align education and training with labor demand

What other businesses does McAlester need?

**Community Responses:**

- Hobby Lobby
- Children's museum
- Bookstore
- Performing Arts Center
- Businesses focused on local and sustainability
- Fun gathering spaces with great/unique atmospheres
- Unique shops
- More & Better grocery stores
    - Aldi's Grocery Store
    - Neighborhood Market's
    - Something other than Walmart
- Co-Ops
- Indoor Farmers Market
- More Entertainment
- Destination Operators
- Ross Clothes

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**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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# PARKS & RECREATION

## CURRENT AMENITIES

**McAlester currently has 16 Park & Recreation Facilities:**

1. B & Jefferson Park
2. Chadick Park
3. Connally Park
4. Eufaula Lake*
5. Expo Event Center*
6. Hutchison Park
7. Jeff Lee Park
8. Komar Park
9. McAlester Lake*
10. Michael J. Hunter Park
11. Mullen Park
12. Pete Rosso Park
13. Puterbaugh Park
14. Rotary Park
15. Thunderbird Park
16. Will Rogers Park



| BASEBALL FIELDS | BBQ GRILLS | PAVILLIONS | PICNIC TABLES | RESTROOMS | SWIMMING & WADING POOLS | WALKING TRAILS | ADA ACCESSIBILITY | TENNIS COURTS |

## PARKS IN MCALESTER

**Did you know?**

The McAlester Arboretum features 25 acres of some of the most unique trees and plants in the country, including one of the largest collections of named cultivars of Oaks and Redbuds west of the Mississippi River.

SOURCE: THE CITY OF MCALESTER



**KEY**
River or Creek
McAlester Park
1/2 Mile Walk to Park
Watershed

**MOVING McALESTER FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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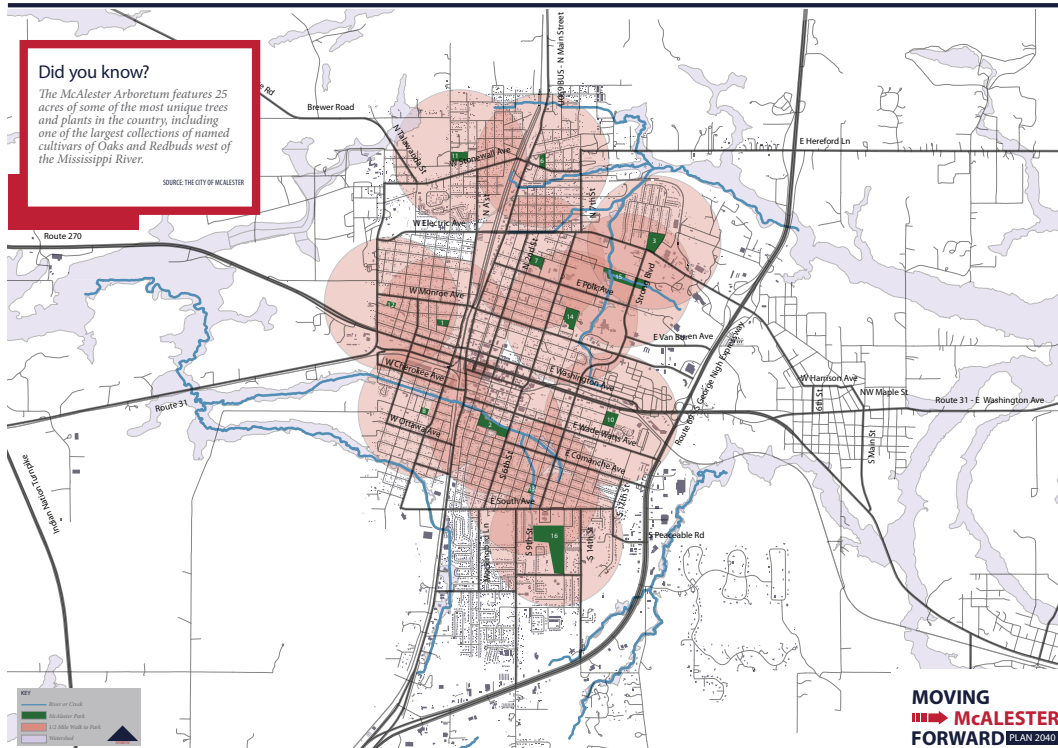
# PARKS AND RECREATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

How do you currently enjoy McAlester's parks, trails, and recreation opportunities? What changes would you make?

**Community Responses:**

- Mike Deak track – needs better lighting
    - We love Mike Deak
- Water Park (local use, destination for people not from McAlester, economic benefits)
    - New city owned water park
- No opportunities nearby for nature – Robbers Cave is the closest place – kids need green spaces
    - Need more green spaces
- Need signage improvement
    - I love our parks but many people who aren't from around here don't know where they are located
- I use the pool weekly in the summer – love the shade for picnics – need more trees
    - There is no other pool in the community and it is important to preserve a place to learn how to swim
- Children's museum's – educational opportunities
- Walking trails
    - Parks and trails all connected
- Parent networking opportunities
- Events in the parks
- Public restrooms in the parks
- I use the disk golf course
- Rotary Park – lovely playgrounds – no nature interaction/shade trees
- Indoor park and playground
- Outdoor concert venue
- ADA accessible playground
- Public Wifi access
- Community Theater
- Need more culture/beautification
- Mountain bike trails (like Bentonville, AR)
- Create joint agreements with current gyms, playgrounds, and facilities for more use
- 5th-9th south – 15 wild acres would make a great park

How can we improve health, education, environmental assets, and other areas that affect quality of life in McAlester?

**Community Responses:**

- Active living - bike trails, sidewalks, beautification
- Access to healthy food
- Smoke free events and properties
- Curbside recycling
    - Waste recycling
- Traffic calming
- Better lighting in the city
- Low cost community outreach & programming for health
- Suicide prevention access to mental health
- Everything needs to be more affordable and targeted at the low income families
- Access to health care worksites (69 Highway)
- Indoor farmer's market

**MOVING**
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**FORWARD** PLAN 2040

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# SWOT

## McAlester SWOT

### Strengths
- Stable population
- Long-term employers
- Intact downtown
- Access to vehicular transportation highway network
- Adjacent to multiple recreational opportunities
- Regional medical hub

### Weaknesses
- Lack of middle priced housing
- Lack of "quality" housing
- Distance to major metropolitan areas
- Population in the region is shrinking
- No tribal headquarters
- No residential college/university
- Negative perceptions due to prison presence
- No passenger rail connections

### Opportunities
- Recreational-based tourism and industry
- Land for industrial growth
- Growth in national defense-relate industry
- Downtown and Old Town can accommodate renovations and reuse
- Streets large enough to accommodate non-motorized transportation uses

### Threats
- Reduction in mission or even closure of McAlester Army Ammunition Plant
- Employment loss due to reduction in mission or closure of prison facilities
- Younger generation not staying, or those that staying not having as many children
- Other cities in region capitalizing on growth and transportation connection opportunities
- Lack of employment pool for growing industries
- Lack of industry-ready (utility-connected) land
- Deteriorating underground infrastructure

Comprehensive Plan

# APPENDIX C

## MAPS

- Existing Zoning Map (2014)
- Existing Ward Map (2018)
- Open Space Map
- Existing Parks with 1/2 Mile Radius
- Trails Master Plan & Existing Parks
- Water Utilities
- Sanitary Sewer Map
- Future Land Use Map

## Legend

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A-1 | | H-1 | |
| R-1a | | I-1 | |
| R-1B | | I-2 | |
| R-2 | | | |
| R-3 | | | |
| C-1 | | | |
| C-2 | | | |
| C-3 | | | |
| C-4 | | | |
| C-5 | | | |

" This is to Certify that this is the official
ZONING MAP of the City of McAlester."

By:

Steve Harrison, Mayor

ATTEST:

Cora Middleton, City Clerk

# McALESTER ZONING MAP
## JANUARY 29, 2014

*CURRENT ZONING MAP (2014)*

WARD BOUNDARY MAP
CITY OF McALESTER
REVISED: DECEMBER 26, 2017
EFFECTIVE: JULY 1, 2018

NORTH
SCALE IN FEET
0    1000    2000    3000

CURRENT WARD MAP (2018)

OPEN SPACE MAP

KEY

Existing Parks

1/2 Mile Walk to Existing Parks

NORTH

EXISTING PARKS (WITH ½-MILE SERVICE RADIUS)

TRAILS MASTER PLAN ROUTE & EXISTING PARKS

Brewer Rd

Carl Albert Pkwy

Carl Albert Pkwy

Indian Nation Turnpike

Hwy 31

Hwy 31

Indian

Tahlequah St

West St

West St

Shawnee Ave

Krebs Ave

Rector Ave

Monroe Ave

Washington Ave

Chester Rd

Cherokee Ave

Ottawa Ave

Creek Ave

South Ave

A St

B St

Main St

6th St

7th St

5th St

B St

Polk Ave

Van Buren Ave

Electric Ave

King Blvd

Wandotte Ave

Ottawa Ave

Shorty Blvd

Mockingbird Ln

9th St

14th St

17th St

15th St

Windsor Ln

Oklahoma Ave

Hwy 69/George Nigh Expy

McAlester Lake Rd

Brewer Road

E Hereford Ln

N Talawanda St

W Stonewall Ave

UC 69 BUS - N Main Street

Route 270

W Electric Ave

N A St

N 7th St

N 2nd St

E Polk Ave

Strong Blvd

W Monroe Ave

E Van Buren Ave

Route 69 - S George Nigh Expressway

W Cherokee Ave

E Washington Ave

W Harrison Ave

6th St

NW Maple St

Route 31

Route 31 - E

S Main St

W Ottawa Ave

E Wade Watts Ave

Indian Nation Turnpike

S B St

E Comanche Ave

S 17th St

E South Ave

S Peaceable Rd

S Highland Ln

S 9th St

S 14th St

KEY

Water Lines

NORTH

WATER UTILITY MAP

KEY

*Sanitary Sewer Lines*

NORTH

SANITARY SEWER UTILITY MAP

McAlester Lake Rd

Brewer Road

E Hereford Ln

N Talawanda St

W Stonewall Ave

US 69 BUS - N Main Street

N 7th St

N A st

W Electric Ave

Route 270

N 2nd St

E Polk Ave

Strong Blvd

W Monroe Ave

E Van Buren Ave

Route 69 - S George Nigh Expressway

W Cherokee Ave

E Washington Ave

W Harrison Ave

6th St

NW Maple St

Route 31

S Main St

W Ottawa Ave

E Wade Watts Ave

Indian Nation Turnpike

E Comanche Ave

S 6th St

S 17th St

E South Ave

Mockingbird Ln

S 9th St

S 14th St

S Peaceable Rd

FUTURE LAND USE MAP

| | Legend | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Cemetery | | Employment-Institutional | | Mixed-Use | |
| | Commercial | | Institutional (Prison) | | Recreation Open Space | |
| | Conservation Space | | Low Density Residential | | Regional Recreation | |
| | Employment- Light Industrial | | Medium Density Residential | | | |
| | Employment- Heavy Industrial | | Multifamily Residential | | | |

Comprehensive Plan

# APPENDIX D

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTION PLAN

The implementation section or action plan contains specific, achievable, measurable steps that will be taken to achieve the agreed-upon goals and objectives. Generally, this section identifies the who, what, when, how, and how much necessary to accomplish the goals. This section of the plan acts as the work plan of the legislative body in adopting ordinances, resolutions, programs and other policies, and allocating resources (money and personnel) to carry out the goals and objectives of the plan.

The City will start by creating an action plan that identifies the implementation strategies to be implemented in the short term, and indicating possible time frames for the remaining strategies to be undertaken in the long term. Guidance from the plan developers will assist the City in this process.

The action plan will provide specific strategies on critical needs regarding updates to various plans and zoning, subdivision regulations, design guidelines, and recommended enforcement provisions, as well as a listing of potential design- and market-based incentives appropriate for the City. Types of entities will be identified that would be best suited to execute each strategy listed, so that responsibilities can be assigned (or assumed) at the local and regional levels. The worksheets, provided in this section, will serve as an effective tool in not only guiding the implementation activities but in monitoring progress and recording successes.

Within the action plan will be the identification of up to five major strategic initiatives to be led by the City. The initiatives will be selected conferring with City staff and elected and appointed officials. The initiatives will focus on critical needs regarding capital improvements, modifications to existing regulations, and potential design- and market-based incentives appropriate for the City. Case studies found through out the recommendations will be used an examples to ensure the action steps related to these initiatives take into account best practices and lessons learned.

# MOVING McALESTER FORWARD PLAN 2040

## action plan

**A WORKBOOK TO DETERMINE INITIAL STEPS TOWARD SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION**

"How do we keep the plan from gathering dust on a shelf?"

*--Every Community That Is Starting Or Finishing A Planning Process*

## The "JUST DO IT" List:                                    **SAMPLE**

☐ Task: *Pursue Choctaw Nation grant for trail.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Put a link on website to Buildings & Sites.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Change the hours of operation at parks.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Install additional wayfinding in key locations.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Est. grant for fire protection with TIF $.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Increase code enforcement.*     Who: _____     When: _____

☐ Task: *Develop std. shared use agreements.*     Who: _____     When: _____


## INTITIATIVE WORKSHEET | Initiative #_____

Name your major concern in one or two words: _____

List related goals: _____     List related recommendations: _____

Study the details of selected recommendations and circle 1 that you think can be started soon.

Name up to 3 steps, each having a start and finish.          Name obvious partners to work as partners with the City, recognizing that they may change with each step.

1. _____          1. _____
2. _____          2. _____
3. _____          3. _____

Complete this statement:
It would be reasonable to _____ within _____ months.
Discuss this until you have (1) a refined set of steps, especially given <u>who</u> will lead, and (2) a clear definition of milestones.

Transfer your information to complete one of the rows on the KEY INITIATIVES table.

## KEY INTITIATIVES                                    **SAMPLE**

| Initiative | Initial Steps (up to 3) | Rec # | Target Dates | Metric | Lead | Potential Partners | Details |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown | Define scope/RFQ and interview | | Q1-19 | Consultant selection, contract | City - ECD | Main Street, Chamber. Tourism, Business Owners | |
| | Prepare master plan | | Q4-19 | Master Plan (adopted) | City - ECD | Consultant | |
| Amend LDC - ADUs | Define ADU types, possible districts, expectations | | Q1-19 | Table – types, districts, conditions | City - ECD | Neigh reps | |
| | Identify model language (ordinances) | | Q1-19 | List with links | City - ECD | | Start with Portland's (see plan) |
| | Draft proposed amendments | | Q2-19 | Proposed amendment | City - ECD | Consultant | |
| Amend LDC – Open Space | Define "valuable" open space types | | Q3-19 | Map – types, descriptions | City - ECD | | This definition should be determined with stakeholders. |
| | Identify model language (ordinances) | | Q3-19 | List with links | City - ECD | | |
| | Draft proposed amendments | | Q1-20 | Proposed amendment | City - ECD | Consultant | |
| Targeted Recruitment Strategy | Research – identify companies that align with brand, | | Q2-19 | List of companies | City - ECD | | |
| | Create profiles, define target audiences | | Q2-19 | Written descriptions | City - ECD | | |
| | Determine type and timing of communication with each audience | | Q3-19 | Lists of events, materials | City - ECD | | |
| | Develop workplan for reaching each audience identified | | Q4-19 | Workplan | City - ECD | | Work plan should be created with 2020 calendar and FY19-20 + FY20-21 budgets in mind. |