



# 5 LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT

This chapter of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the fundamental framework for how land should be used and developed over the next several years. The Land Use and Development Plan reflects the broader vision for the community and provides the context for transportation, infrastructure, parks and open space, environmental features, community facilities, and community character recommendations. The chapter is structured to introduce a series of guiding principles, constraints and influences, and land use categories that describe the functional characteristics of the community.



## LAND USE INFLUENCES

Gardner has four significant factors that influence future land use and development. While these factors may place some constraints on development potential, they also present future development opportunities.

### OIL & GAS WELLS

Gardner's boundaries and areas to the north and west include several planned and active oil and gas wells. In 2013, according to the Kansas Geological Survey, Johnson County produced 307,011 barrels of oil out of 891 wells, and 36,101 barrels of gas out of 35 wells. Active and approved wells outside the municipal boundary may be difficult to prohibit, though the Future Land Use Plan defines the intended use for areas where wells are not currently approved or where wells may expire or be taken off-line over time.



### LOGISTICS PARK KANSAS CITY (LPKC) INTERMODAL FACILITY

In late 2013, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) Railway began transitioning routes from Kansas City to the new, state-of-the-art, Logistics Park Kansas City (LPKC) Intermodal Facility in Edgerton. The 1,000-acre development is located adjacent to Gardner's southwestern border. While the facility is a boon for the global supply chain, the facility brings with it heavy truck and rail traffic. Land use development decisions near the facility must consider the impacts of the industrial and warehousing uses that surround and support the LPKC Intermodal Facility.

### NEW CENTURY AIR CENTER

The New Century Air Center is a 2,500-acre facility that includes an airport and business park, and defines the eastern border of Gardner. The business park includes more than thirty businesses that specialize in the air industry, light manufacturing, and warehousing. The airport is managed by the Johnson County Airport Commission which reviews development and zoning for areas within one mile of the airport, to ensure they are compatible with airport operations. Future land use surrounding the New Century Air Center must consider airport operation constraints, but can build upon the existing industries located within the business park.



### I-35 CORRIDOR

Interstate 35 provides access to Gardner at US-56 and Gardner Road. While these interchanges provide the potential for new growth, the corridor itself serves as a barrier. Future development in the southeast portion of the community must balance development opportunities with challenges related to connectivity for infrastructure and municipal services.

### IMPLICATIONS

Each of the factors above have unique influences on the land use and development pattern of Gardner. Both the LPKC Intermodal Facility and New Century Air Center encourage similar light industrial uses to be clustered adjacent to these facilities. The I-35 Corridor and existing oil and gas wells serve as barriers that limit short-term development potential. Given these factors, the land use plan is designed to leverage these influences, creating a land use pattern that balances multiple uses and compliments Gardner's existing and desired land uses.



## LAND USE CATEGORIES

### AGRICULTURE/RURAL RESIDENTIAL

Agricultural land uses include those with cultivated fields actively used for raising crops, livestock, and other farming related activities, and may include large-lot single family dwellings. Agricultural/Rural Residential land uses are generally located on the periphery of the urbanized area.

### LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Low Density Residential areas primarily consists of detached single family homes. Housing is typically arranged on a local street grid, or as part of a subdivision, and may include local amenities such as playgrounds or gardens that serve residents.

### MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

Medium Density Residential areas typically include single family attached homes. Examples include duplexes, triplexes, and town homes. Medium density residential may also include detached single family homes organized on smaller parcels, as cluster development, or as mobile home parks.

### HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL

High Density Residential areas consist mainly of multi-family homes, which are defined as structures that contain multiple units, usually stacked vertically and attached horizontally, typically with common hallways and amenities. Examples of high density residential uses include apartment and condominium buildings.

### MIXED USE

Mixed Use areas are characterized by buildings that contain multiple uses. Retail, dining, and entertainment uses are ideally suited for the ground floor, while upper floors are best used for offices and residential dwellings. Not every building within a mixed use area is required to have multiple uses, rather, the designation seeks to promote multiple uses within a designated area. These areas are characterized by a mix of uses and development that create vibrant, safe, attractive, and "walkable" pedestrian environments.

### COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL

Community Commercial land uses are intended to provide retail and professional services for the everyday needs of the people residing or working in the community. Uses should be limited to those that meet the needs of residents such as grocery and retail stores, restaurants, hotels, professional services, and entertainment venues, as well as office and medical commercial uses. Community commercial uses can be located in stand-alone structures, or as part of a small shopping center with multiple commercial uses.



### REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Regional Commercial uses provide goods and services that may attract users from the greater metropolitan area. Regional commercial areas generally require larger parcels and are best suited for large, big box stores, office parks, and corporate campuses. These areas are best located near interstates and major arterial roads to capitalize on accessibility from areas beyond Gardner.

### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL & OFFICE PARKS

Light Industrial facilities involve the manufacturing, processing, storage, and distribution of goods and materials that may have limited effect on surrounding uses. Typically, operations occur indoors, though outdoor storage or distribution may produce negative impacts such as truck traffic and visual and auditory nuisances on nearby uses. However, some light industrial areas may also be suitable for large office parks and corporate campuses.



### UTILITY

Utility uses include infrastructure such as pumping stations, treatment plants, and electrical substations that support development throughout the community.

### PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC

Public/Semi-Public land uses include governmental, educational, and religious land uses. Governmental uses includes offices, public safety uses, public service agencies, and other uses that are both government-owned and relate to the operation of the City, County, and the local area. Educational uses include elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and other local K-12 educational institutions, as well as pre-K and daycare facilities. Religious uses include facilities used by a congregation for gathering and worship.



### PARK

Parks are designated areas protected from development and maintained by the Parks and Recreation Department, or another entity. Park land uses include neighborhood and community parks, golf courses, and recreational facilities.

### OPEN SPACE

Open Space includes areas not designated as an active park, but may contain features such as woods, wetlands, bodies of water, etc. that are important components of the local environment and are unsuitable for development. Open spaces may provide vital flood management, serving as areas for stormwater detention and filtration, as well as opportunities for greenways and natural areas.

## I-35 INTERCHANGE & SOUTHEAST QUADRANT GROWTH AREAS

The portion of the planning area around the I-35 interchanges, and south and east of I-35 currently includes agricultural or undeveloped land, and represents areas of potential growth for the Gardner community. However, the type and/or timing of development in this area is difficult to predict. With this in mind, the City has completed a process to study subareas of the comprehensive plan planning area, specifically at the two interchanges of I-35.

Plans prepared for subareas, whether they are areas within the City of Gardner or areas within unincorporated Johnson County contain detailed policy guidance for those areas once they are contained within the City of Gardner. The plans are separate documents from the Comprehensive Plan however are incorporated by reference into this chapter. The plans become the official Comprehensive Plan policy for the respective areas and are an element of the comprehensive plan. The policy contained in the plans take precedence over other policy found in this plan, unless specifically stated otherwise in the subarea plans.

The subarea plans detail existing conditions pertaining to character, land uses, zoning patterns, infrastructure, environmental conditions, and community facilities. Public input from the planning process is highlighted. The policy framework includes recommendations for future vision, goals and policies, future land use and development principles, and future infrastructure.

The following plans have been adopted and incorporated by reference:

- I-35 & Gardner Road Interchange Subarea Plan  
Adopted by Planning Commission: May 24, 2016  
Adopted by City Council: June 20, 2016

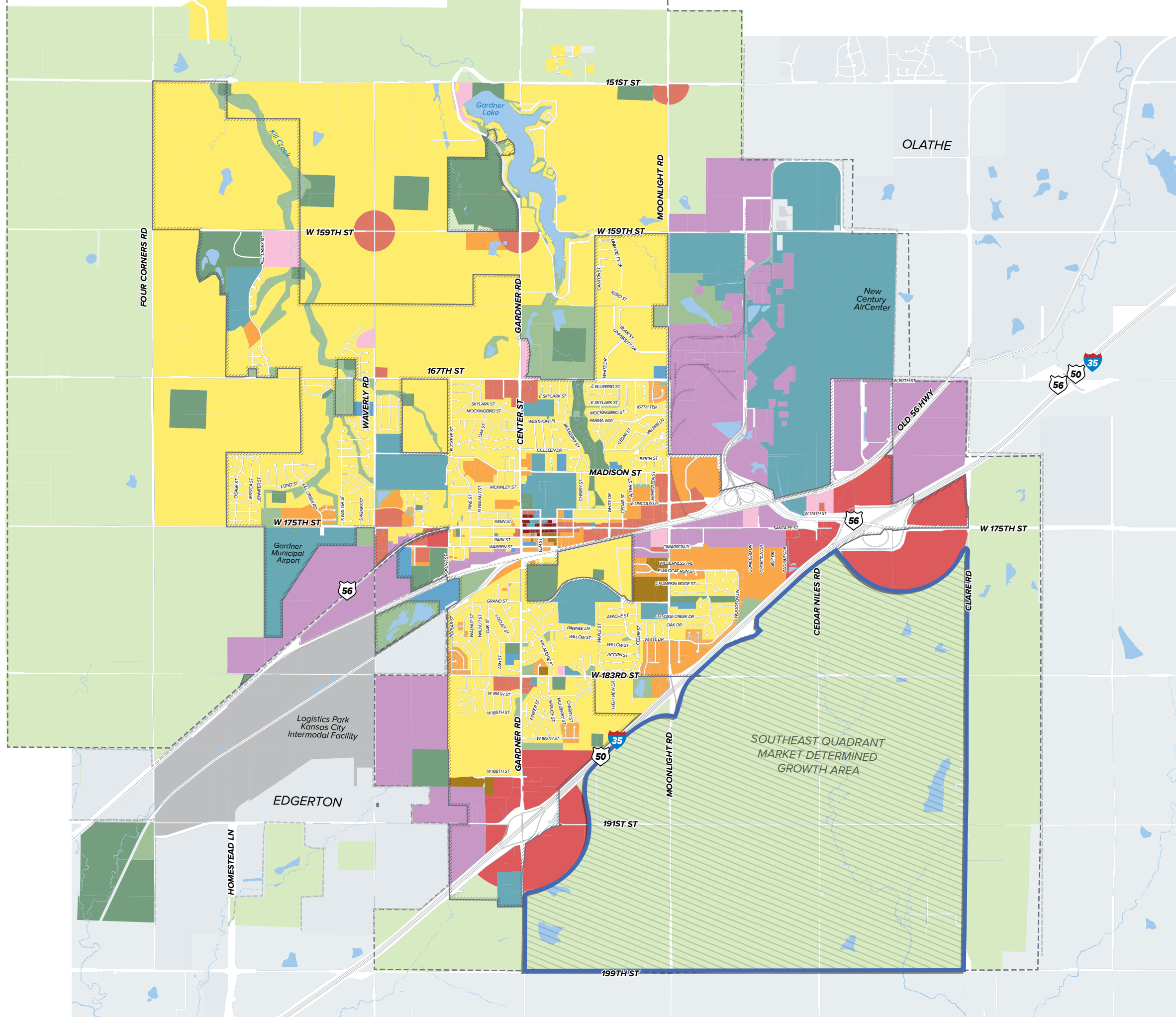
## ANNEXATION OF SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

While factors may limit short-term development, the City should be proactive to secure control of the land within the Southeast Quadrant for development over the long-term. This can be accomplished through formal annexation of land and/or annexation agreements with property owners. This will ensure that the City can take full advantage of future development opportunities in the area as they arise.



# CITY OF GARDNER LAND USE PLAN

- Agriculture/Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Downtown Mixed Use
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Light Industrial & Office Park
- Open Space
- Parks & Recreation
- Public/Semi-Public
- Utility
- Southeast Quadrant Market Determined Growth Area
- Municipal Boundary
- Planning Area









# RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN

Gardner's neighborhoods and quality housing are defining attributes of the City's character and identity. Based on community feedback throughout the outreach process, and building upon the Land Use Plan, this Residential Areas Plan provides policies and recommendations that aim to reinforce the positive character of neighborhoods throughout the City.

This section categorizes Gardner's residential areas into three types:

- Traditional
- Contemporary
- New Growth

Each of these residential areas face unique challenges and opportunities. The Residential Areas Plan considers the unique characteristics in these areas, and aims to achieve the community's goals of providing high quality neighborhoods that satisfy demand for a broad type of housing.

## TRADITIONAL RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Gardner's Traditional Residential Areas include those located near Downtown and near Gardner Lake. Single family residences are the predominant housing type. In the area around the Downtown, the housing stock dates back to the early 1900's and is arranged in a traditional grid pattern with alleys. However, structures around Gardner Lake were built in the early to mid-twentieth century and have been altered with renovations and additions to serve as year-round residences. Despite the differences, these portions of the community are facing many of the same challenges.



## MAINTENANCE

Many of the structures within the Traditional Residential Areas are close to a century in age, with some more than 100 years old. Several of these structures are in need of maintenance and upkeep. In order to support these areas, the City should implement the following actions:

- Actively enforce City codes related to maintenance and appearance with the intent of encouraging investment that brings structure into compliance
- Partner with local lending institutions to support low-interest loans that result in investments that address code compliance issues and/or maintain property values
- Consider partnerships with local volunteer programs for maintenance assistance for low income and elderly residents
- Support existing neighborhood organizations, and the creation of new ones that provide support and efficiencies of scale related to the maintenance of properties and public spaces

## REINVESTMENT & RENOVATION

Traditional Residential Areas, especially those near Downtown, include housing of a modest size. While this provides affordable housing for entry into the ownership market, it also requires renovation to modernize units with contemporary amenities. In order to promote reinvestment in Traditional Residential Areas through renovations and updates, the City should:

- Review the Gardner Design Standards and amend them as necessary to allow rehabilitation and remodels of residential structures that are consistent with the existing neighborhood character
- Consider partnerships with local lenders to offer low-interest home improvement loans
- Work with local designers and contractors to develop a pattern book that illustrates appropriate ways to integrate additions and new amenities

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Traditional Residential Areas convey a unique community character that contributes to the overall identity of Gardner. This character is defined by the housing stock, public realm, high level of walkability, and access to nearby commercial land uses. In order to maintain the character of these areas, the City should implement the following strategies:

- Preserve existing parkway trees and replace them as needed with species that will be resilient to disease and anticipated climate change
- Implement a sidewalk infill program to create a comprehensive pedestrian network including crosswalks and curb cuts that are ADA compliant
- Review and amend the Landscape Ordinance to require industrial and commercial areas to provide and maintain landscaped buffers and screening between residential areas if such uses are located across a public right-of-way and if the residential parcel already includes screening
- Continue to use alleys where they exist to support utilities and service operations



*Vegetation provides a buffer between residential areas and adjacent roads.*

## CONTEMPORARY RESIDENTIAL AREAS

Contemporary Residential Areas include newer, more modern housing stock that are generally part of planned subdivision developments. These areas provide a variety of housing types from single family detached and attached homes, to multi-family structures. Contemporary Residential Areas are generally built-out with an established design character, but may also include incomplete subdivisions. Many neighborhoods within this category are identified by gateway signs and were built during the housing boom of the 1990's and early 2000's. Contemporary Residential Areas are generally well-maintained and provide quality middle-market housing in Gardner. In order to preserve their character, the City should consider the following actions.

## BUFFERING

The Gardner Design Standards and Landscape Ordinance both require landscape buffers and screening between land uses and around property perimeters. However, many of Gardner's existing residential subdivisions were built before the adoption of these requirements, resulting in a lack of landscape buffers and/or poor maintenance. In order to ensure future development has adequate visual buffers between different land uses and along public rights-of-way, the City should consider the following actions:

- Review and amend the Gardner Design Standards and Landscape Ordinance to ensure requirements for residential areas provide and maintain adequate buffering and screening from arterial and collector streets
- Ensure emerging commercial and industrial uses adjacent to established residential areas maintain adequate landscaped buffers

## CHARACTER PRESERVATION

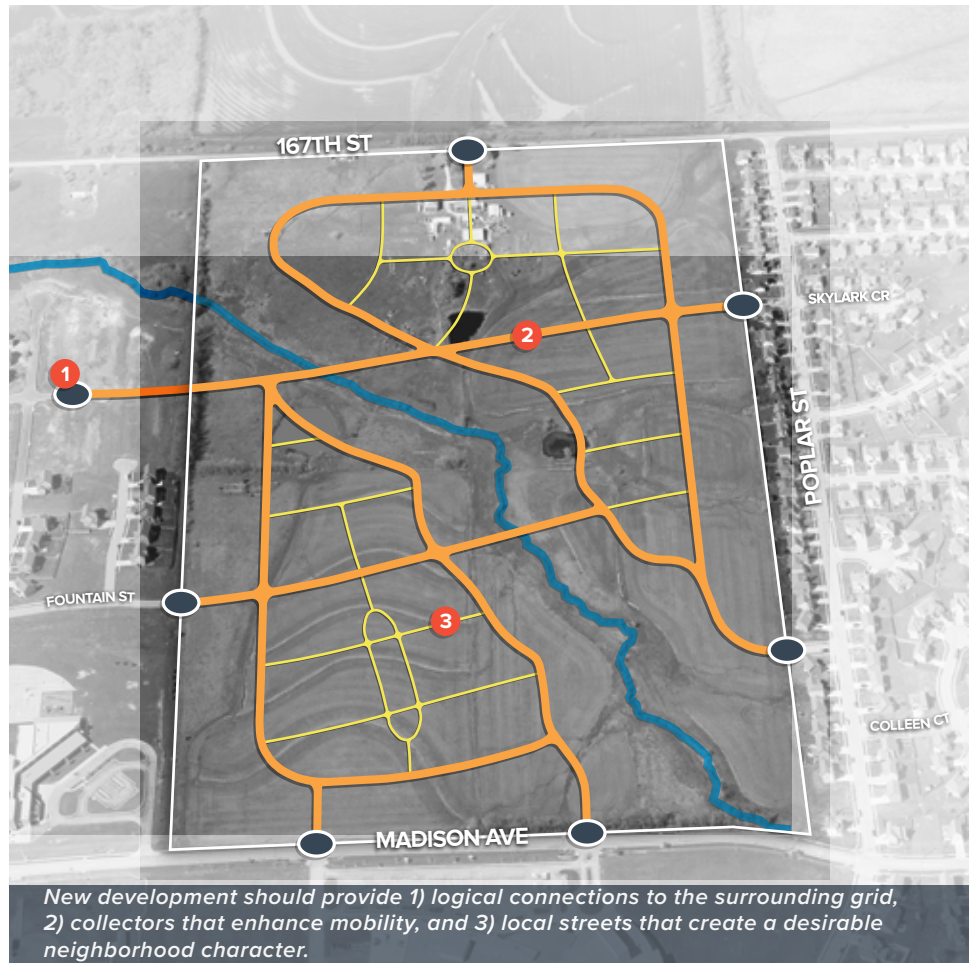
Neighborhoods within the Contemporary Residential Areas are generally in good condition with a high level of property maintenance. Ongoing upkeep and neighborhood improvement projects will assist with maintaining property values and preserve community character. In order to maximize the likelihood of this, the City should implement the following actions:

- Encourage private tree planting to enhance Gardner's tree canopy, especially in front yards near the public right-of-way where they will create a sense of enclosure for neighborhoods streets as they mature over time
- Reinforce neighborhood identity by supporting or requiring the installation and maintenance of subdivision entry signs and decorative landscaping
- Continue to monitor the condition of Contemporary Residential Areas and enforce applicable codes and standards that will ensure neighborhood deterioration does not become an issue
- Develop landscaping and property maintenance requirements for prefabricated homes to ensure they blend with surrounding residential development

## LOCAL MOBILITY

Contemporary Residential Areas are part of a well-connected street and sidewalk network that provide access and mobility to all parts of Gardner. In order to enhance the existing network, the City should implement the following:

- Implement a sidewalk infill program that includes pedestrian through-access, connecting residential subdivisions through footpaths and trails
- Where feasible, utilize undeveloped areas or floodplains as green connections that support stormwater movement, trails, and wildlife migration through neighborhoods
- Ensure incomplete subdivisions provide safe roadway, sidewalk, and/or trail connections to the existing transportation network



*New development should provide 1) logical connections to the surrounding grid, 2) collectors that enhance mobility, and 3) local streets that create a desirable neighborhood character.*

## NEW RESIDENTIAL GROWTH AREAS

New Residential Growth Areas include undeveloped land that provides a “clean slate” for future residential development. Gardner is projected to grow in terms of both its residential population, and its employment opportunities; the New Residential Growth Areas represent an opportunity to create a full spectrum of housing options for a range of income levels.

## NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

New development has the opportunity to contribute to and enforce the City’s existing character and identity. As the City subdivides new portions of the community for residential development, it should implement the following actions:

- Ensure new development meets the requirements in the Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Ordinance, providing flexibility where necessary to accommodate a variety of housing types and intensities
- Ensure the character of new residential areas are compatible with existing neighborhoods and reflect the intended character of Gardner in terms of block size and configuration, housing scale and architecture, and design of the public realm
- Work closely with residential developers to encourage local development patterns that provide a variety of housing types and allow aging residents to “downsize” and stay in the neighborhood or subdivision

## CONNECTIVITY

New Residential Growth Areas should serve as an extension of the existing City's transportation and infrastructure network. As development occurs, new residential neighborhoods should connect seamlessly to the existing community through roadways, sidewalks, and trails. As new residential development projects are proposed, the City should:

- Coordinate public street design and infrastructure to promote streetscapes that allow for trees to be planted in the parkway
- Minimize cul-de-sacs and dead end streets in order to maximize local access and circulation
- Require pedestrian connections to adjacent streets and neighborhoods at the terminus of all new cul-de-sacs
- Require New Residential Growth Areas to integrate trails within their design and provide connections to the existing trail network
- Require developers to construct full sidewalk build out as part of Phase I residential development

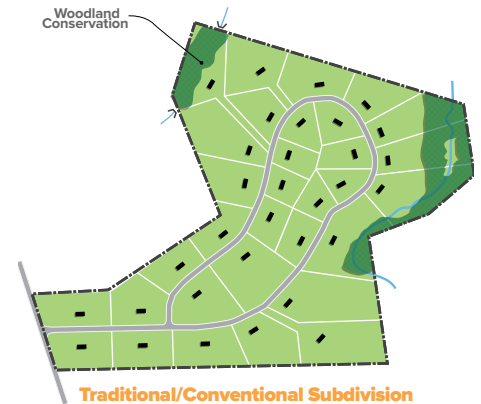
## OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION DESIGN

New Residential Growth Areas provide a tremendous opportunity to create a development pattern that integrates unique natural elements, manages flood and stormwater, and creates public amenities. The existing Gardner Greenway is considered a community asset by residents, and serves as a model for how the City can create additional greenways and open space areas throughout the City. In order to maximize and preserve open space as development occurs, the City should implement the following:

- Require and incentivize conservation design and cluster development that preserves sensitive natural areas by allowing greater development density in other portions of the site
- Integrate stormwater detention areas and corridors in order to effectively mitigate the impacts of flooding
- Require trails, useful open spaces, and parks throughout new development areas through dedications and easements set aside as part of the development review process
- Utilize environmental features, topography, and natural areas, to guide development, and shape the potential development area of residential sites



Sample Development Site



Traditional/Conventional Subdivision



Conservation Subdivision

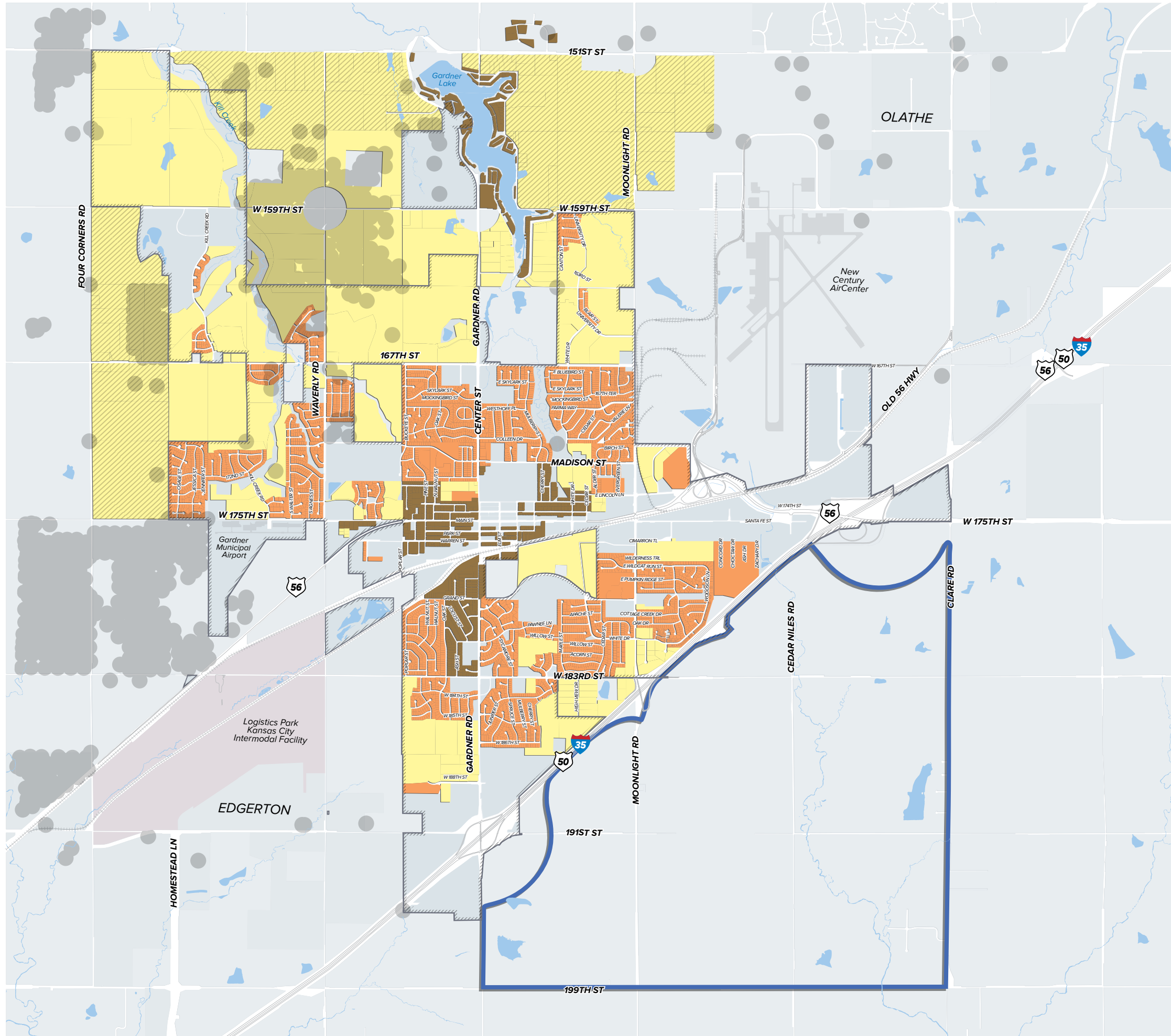


## OIL & GAS MINING

As described earlier, there are several portions of the planning area where oil and gas extraction are on-going or planned. However, the duration and economic viability of these operations are largely unknown, and may vary greatly in different portions of the planning area. Active and approved wells outside the municipal boundary may be difficult to prohibit. However, as drilling sites come off-line, they should be properly capped and developed according to the underlying future land use designation as market potential dictates.

## LONG-TERM GROWTH AREAS

The Future Land Use Plan identifies residential areas large enough to absorb future population growth for the next several decades. However, many of the New Residential Growth areas lie on the fringe of the planning area and are disconnected from the rest of the community. This Residential Area Plan identifies portions of the community that should be reserved for long-term residential growth. Short-term opportunities for community development should be focused in other areas of the community that are closer to existing public services, served by or easily connected to existing infrastructure, and provide the opportunity to fill in gaps in the urbanized footprint.



# CITY OF GARDNER RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN

- Traditional
- Contemporary
- New Growth
- Long-Term Growth
- Oil & Gas Wells
- Southeast Quadrant Market Determined Growth Area

### Residential Growth Capacity

The table below summarizes the residential growth capacity based on the Future Land Use Plan. Assumed densities and household sizes reflect residential development patterns and demographics that are consistent with recent neighborhood investment in the community. The short-term growth areas should be the priority for new development, and can accommodate the projected growth identified by the Mid America Regional Council. The long-term growth areas should be preserved as agricultural uses until short-term growth areas are built out.

### GARDNER RESIDENTIAL GROWTH CAPACITY ANALYSIS

New Growth Type	Area (acres)	Assumed Density		Number of Housing Units		Assumed Household Size	New Population Capacity	
		Low	High	Low	High		Low	High
Priority Growth Areas	2,889	4.0	6.0	11,556	17,335	2.7	31,202	46,803
Long-term Growth Areas	1,721	4.0	6.0	6,884	10,326	2.7	18,587	27,880
Southeast Quadrant	2,933	4.0	6.0	11,731	17,596	2.7	31,673	47,509

2010 Population	19,123	19,123
Priority Area Population Capacity	50,923	66,822
Long-term Population Capacity	69,510	94,703
Long-term Population Capacity including Southeast Quadrant	100,585	141,316







# COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN

Gardner’s commercial areas provide vital goods and services to residents and visitors, include public areas for community events and gathering, and generate significant tax revenue that funds municipal services and infrastructure. They also play a significant role in the image and identity of the City.

Commercial areas in Gardner are generally located along US-56/Main Street, Moonlight Road, and around the I-35/US-56 interchange. This section of the Comprehensive Plan recognizes the varying physical and market characteristics of the different commercial areas and categorizes them into four types:

- Downtown Mixed-Use
- Main Street Corridor
- Community Commercial
- Regional Commercial

It provides policy recommendations to guide reinvestment in existing commercial areas, and ensures future development is reflective of broader community goals.

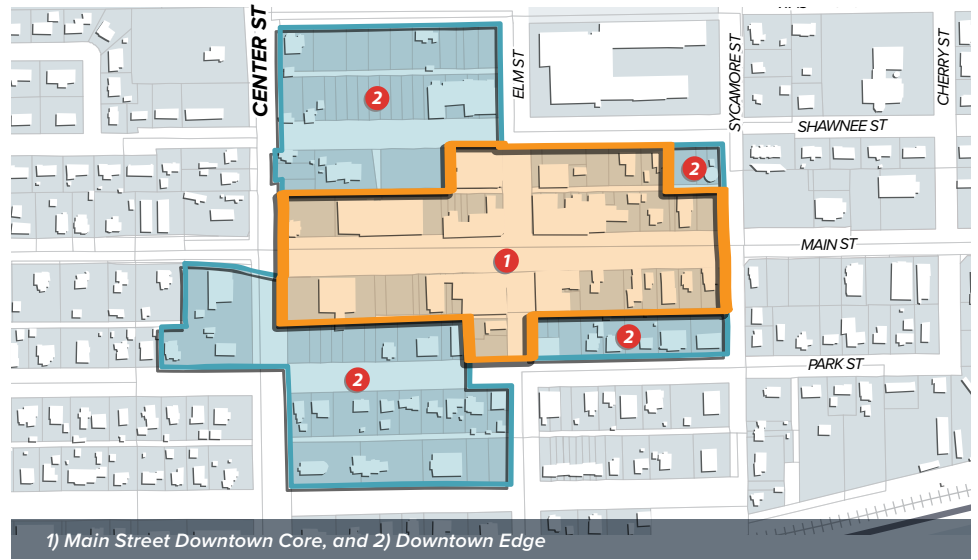
## **DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE**

Downtown serves as the historic core and center of civic activity for Gardner. The area is anchored by City Hall and includes the Johnson County Library, Senior Center, and historic Bray House. While Main Street serves as the primary east-west corridor, the boundaries of Downtown extend north to Washington Street, south to Warren Avenue, and to the east and west by Sycamore Street and Center Street, respectively. A vibrant downtown environment should build upon a mix of retail restaurant, office, and residential land uses, pedestrian-friendly streets, and attractive buildings and architecture.

## MAIN STREET CHARACTER

As the primary thoroughfare through Downtown, Main Street plays a significant role in conveying the image of the City center, and the community as a whole. This area should continue to accommodate mixed-use or commercial development that is built to the front property line and pedestrian friendly in terms of façade design, massing, and streetscape. Between Sycamore and Center Street, the early 1900's traditional architecture establishes a streetwall that helps to define the space and provide the framework for a pedestrian-oriented environment. However, this streetwall is soon broken by surface parking lots and inconsistent front setbacks. Future development and design of Downtown should consider the following actions and policies:

- Work with property owners to procure funding for the rehabilitation of structures and facades in Downtown
- Maximize the use of underutilized portions of the public realm for landscaping, wayfinding signage, historic markers, benches, and other streetscape amenities
- Explore opportunities to reconfigure Main Street to accommodate more substantial streetscape elements including medians, reconfigured parking, and new traffic patterns for a more pedestrian- and business-friendly Downtown
- Continue to use alleys to host utility operations, allowing Main Street to remain clear of utility poles and lines
- Support the creation of a business improvement district to help fund public realm maintenance, marketing, events, security, and beautification projects
- Modify development regulations to ensure that commercial properties provide adequate screening against nearby residential properties
- Conduct a historic survey of Downtown and the surrounding residential neighborhoods to reestablish a Downtown Enhancement District



## DOWNTOWN EDGE

The periphery of the Downtown includes a variety of uses, including parking lots that support uses on Main Street, secondary commercial activities, government or civic uses, and varying densities of residential development. Development in this area should continue to support the Downtown as a whole by through the following actions:

- Support a variety of housing types that meet market demand and provide easy access to Downtown uses for a large number of residents
- Ensure development regulations address the impacts of Downtown uses on residential areas, including parking, access, building design, utility screening, etc.
- Utilize vacant lots as an opportunity to increase the residential population close to the Downtown
- Require development to reflect the character of the Downtown area through attractive building design and architectural materials
- Provide pedestrian connections to the Main Street area and surrounding neighborhoods to support multi-modal access to Downtown

## PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking is an important component in many commercial areas, allowing access to local shops and restaurants. However, the location and configuration of surface parking lots are often detrimental to the desired character of Downtown. In order to balance the goals of providing sufficient parking capacity and maintaining a traditional Downtown character, the City should implement the following strategies:

- Develop or screen existing surface parking lots that front on Main Street or adjacent uses
- Use alleys for access to parking areas
- Work with property owners to relocate parking lots that currently front on Main Street to rear portions of the block so that Main Street frontage can be redeveloped with buildings that reinforce the desired character
- Periodically conduct parking surveys that assess the capacity and location of Downtown parking relative to demand at different times of the day and week
- Encourage shared parking agreements between Downtown tenants or for special events (i.e. use of bank parking during weekend events or festivals)



*Curb cuts are frequent along Main Street*

## MAIN STREET CORRIDOR

The Main Street corridor includes commercial properties along US-56/Main Street from Moonlight Road to Sycamore Street. This corridor serves as the gateway into Gardner, though the fragmented development pattern and surface parking frontage create a commercial environment that lacks cohesion and character.

Recommendations within this section complement those within the US-56 Corridor Management Plan.

## ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Multiple curb cuts and parking lots along the Main Street corridor reduce the efficiency of the roadway network, and result in a high number of conflict points. Access management principles can be used to enhance access to local uses, and support multi-modal mobility. The City should consider the following access management strategies:

- Encourage the use of cross-access between adjacent lots that would enhance circulation without reliance on turning movements on Main Street
- Prioritize access to parking areas from side streets and alleys rather than from Main Street
- Work with property owners to consolidate or remove excessive curb cuts to individual properties
- Review development regulation related to parking to ensure that required on-site capacity does not create undue strain, especially within the context of other regulations related to landscaping, access, required yards, and buffers against other land uses
- Allow for and encourage shared parking agreements between uses whose parking demand occurs during different times of the day or week

## CHARACTER

As the gateway into Gardner, the character of Main Street plays an important role in Gardner's overall image and identity. Currently, the wide street cross-section and unscreened parking lots are the predominant visual elements of Main Street. Though they are often set back from the street, the design and orientation of buildings on Main Street have a significant impact on the character of Gardner. In order to foster a vibrant commercial corridor, and have Main Street serve as a positive entrance into Gardner, the City should implement the following strategies:

- Actively enforce municipal ordinances to ensure that structures and landscaping are properly maintained and in compliance with development and building codes
- Review and amend sign regulations as appropriate to require signage that is attractive, integrated into building and landscape design, and consistent with the desired character of the Main Street corridor
- Work with property owners to install parking edge landscaping and trees to decrease the visual impacts of surface parking lots
- Work with KDOT to assess the viability of, and implement a reconfigured Main Street that would maintain traffic flow, enhance vehicular safety, and create additional space for sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and/or landscaping areas

## INVESTMENT & REDEVELOPMENT

Redevelopment along Main Street is inhibited by small commercial lots and a close relationship to surrounding residential areas. In order to appropriately manage this relationship and maximize opportunities for investment and redevelopment, the City should implement the following actions:

- Support investment in existing commercial structures and sites through the development of a façade enhancement program, business improvement district, the pursuit of outside funding, or other policy and funding alternatives
- Identify areas where commercial development on the north side of Main Street can encroach north, to Shawnee Street, by redeveloping compromised or vacant residential structures, and amending zoning regulations to require significant screening where the future commercial development may back up to existing residential lots
- Work with property owners and developers to identify opportunities to assemble lots to create more substantial redevelopment sites that can better accommodate larger building footprints, on-site parking and circulation, landscaping, and required yards



*Investment in Main Street commercial uses will help stabilize the traditional city center*



## COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL

Community Commercial areas consist of smaller commercial nodes that are intended to meet the needs of residents. Community Commercial areas are generally located within or adjacent to neighborhoods and may consist of stand-alone structures, or small shopping centers with multiple commercial uses.

### MULTI-MODAL ACCESS & CIRCULATION

Community Commercial areas should be well-connected to the surrounding community to ensure that the goods and services provided are easily and safely accessible. However, many commercial developments in Gardner are difficult for pedestrians to access. For example, residents that live north of Moonlight Commons must walk south, past the development, in order to safely cross Moonlight Road to reach its shops and restaurants.

To ensure that automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians can access Community Commercial areas, the City should implement the following strategies:

- Encourage cross access between adjacent commercial uses to reduce traffic on City roads
- Limit the number of curb cuts to increase pedestrian safety and reduce points of conflict
- Make additions to the existing street system to create a safe, efficient, and connected roadway network
- Work with KDOT and Johnson County to install pedestrian crossing infrastructure at signalized and unsignalized intersections including painted crosswalks, pedestrian walk signals and countdown timers, signal phasing that provides adequate time for pedestrians to cross the roadway, and vehicle warning systems that reinforce the presence of pedestrians
- Ensure commercial areas integrate pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjacent neighborhoods
- Modify zoning regulations to require on-site sidewalks and bicycle parking that provide connections to the public sidewalk and trail networks

### CHARACTER

Due to their location near residential areas, the character of Community Commercial areas can have a profound impact on the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Moonlight Commons serves a positive example of a well-designed Community Commercial district that complements near-by residential areas. In order to ensure that emerging Community Commercial areas follow similar high quality architectural design, the City should do the following:

- Ensure new development meets the requirements in the Gardner Design Standards and Landscape Ordinance
- Modify sign regulations to ensure that shopping centers provide signage that is orderly and compatible with the design of other structures and landscaping on the site
- Encourage the use of residential building materials and forms that are compatible with surrounding neighborhood development
- Minimize the impacts of commercial development on residential areas by requiring the screening of dumpsters and service bays, appropriate locations for HVAC infrastructure, and lighting that mitigates overflow and pollution

## REGIONAL COMMERCIAL

Regional Commercial areas are located near I-35 interchanges, and capitalize on accessibility from areas beyond Gardner. These areas generally include big box, name brand stores that have the potential to generate high volumes of traffic. Regional Commercial areas often include large anchor tenants that support the market for smaller local businesses.

## SITE PLANNING & PLACEMAKING

The traditional layout of Regional Commercial uses includes significant setbacks containing large surface parking lots. This auto-oriented site configuration represents a missed opportunity to instill an attractive local character, and create places that encourage patrons to stay in Gardner and take advantage of other stores or activities. To further strengthen regional commercial areas and promote a better shopping experience, the City should execute the following actions:

- Modify zoning and subdivision regulations to require development to site buildings in such a way that they create internal “streets” that are attractive and comfortable for pedestrians
- Use building siting to create plazas and open spaces that are fronted by active commercial façades
- Integrate public amenities such as small parks and trails into Regional Commercial developments
- Ensure new development meets the requirements in the Gardner Design Standards and Landscape Ordinance

## ACCESS MANAGEMENT

Regional Commercial areas typically have large surface parking lots with multiple curb cuts to serve as access points.

However, a well-functioning internal cross access network minimizes the need to utilize arterial and collector roads in order to travel to an adjacent use, and can enhance bicycle and pedestrian mobility throughout the area. In order to support these goals, the City should:

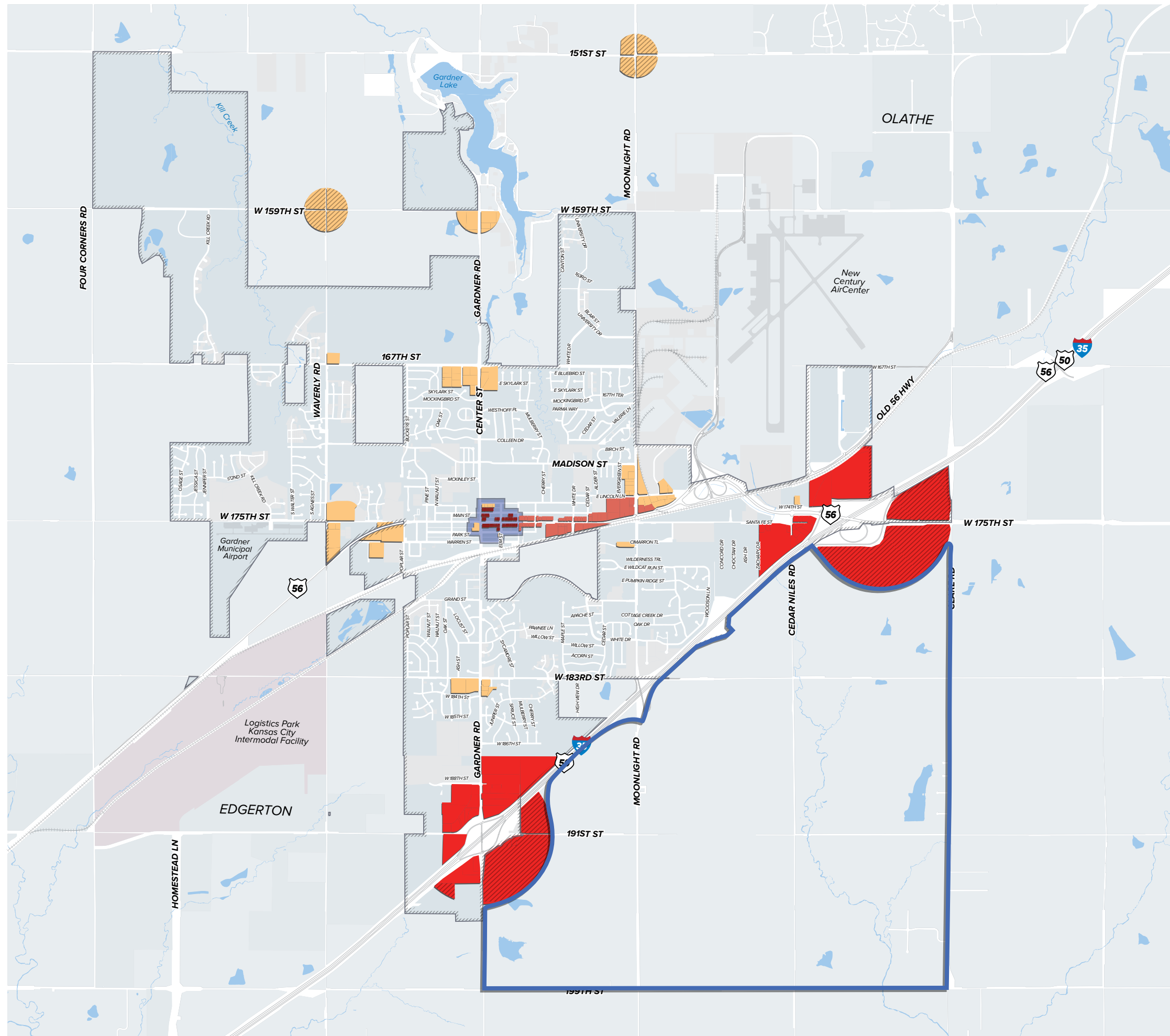
- Require multi-tenant commercial developments to include a coordinated internal circulation network as development proposals and site plans are being prepared
- Review and amend the Gardner Design Standards to include provisions for pedestrian walkways through parking areas, connections to the public sidewalk network, and bicycle lanes and storage areas that are appropriately placed to enhance access to local uses
- Install pedestrian crossing infrastructure at intersections and access points that may include painted crosswalks and vehicle warning systems to reinforce the presence of pedestrians
- Prioritize development near the I-35 interchanges to provide convenient access for vehicular traffic

## LONG-TERM GROWTH AREAS

The Future Land Use Plan identifies some commercial development areas that lie far beyond existing development or points of significant access. These areas are more likely to develop as other long-term investment occurs in the surrounding area. Short-term commercial investment should be focused in other portions of the community where infrastructure already exists, and where supporting residential and industrial development support the market for such development.

# CITY OF GARDNER COMMERCIAL AREAS PLAN

- Regional Commercial
- Downtown Mixed Use
- Main Street Corridor
- Community Commercial
- Long-Term Growth
- Southeast Quadrant Market Determined Growth Area
- Downtown Gardner









Gardner includes a diverse mix of industrial uses including warehousing and distribution operations related to the Logistics Park Kansas City Intermodal Facility, freight and corporate uses located around the New Century AirCenter, and local industry built along the original rail corridor. The Industrial and Office Areas Plan seeks to support existing and future industrial and office park development, while minimizing potential negative impacts on municipal services and other uses in Gardner.

Industrial uses within Gardner primarily include light manufacturing, general office, and distribution. The City has an opportunity to strengthen and grow its industrial base by capitalizing on several well-established and emerging manufacturing and office park areas, each with unique advantages and assets. This section of the Comprehensive Plan identifies strategies aimed at maximizing the potential of these areas.



## NEW CENTURY INDUSTRIAL AREA

The 2,500-acre New Century Air Center includes both a regional airport and business park located at the eastern border of Gardner. The business park hosts more than thirty businesses, some of which have access to active rail spurs. With direct access to I-35 from New Century Parkway, the location and surrounding areas are ideal for additional light manufacturing businesses, warehousing operations, and corporate business parks.

### SITE PLANNING & DESIGN

New Century's location and visibility as the eastern gateway to Gardner, amplify its role in defining the character and identity of the community. Building upon existing development with attractive new investment can reinforce the positive image and aid in recruiting new businesses and employees. The large, undeveloped parcels within and around the New Century Air Center provide an opportunity to design well-planned business and industrial parks. Since the airport and industrial center are not within the Gardner's regulatory purview, the City has limited capacity to control development in this area.

However, there are several actions the City can take to maximize benefits to the community, including:

- Work with local property owners and managers of the New Century Industrial Park to establish local landscaping and architectural standards that are consistent with the City's Industrial Area Airport Overlay District
- Coordinate near-term and long-term infrastructure improvements and service fees to appropriately accommodate anticipated development in the New Century Industrial Park
- Collaborate with the Johnson County Airport Commission, businesses and Industrial Park managers to establish a unified marketing campaign that highlights opportunities for local industrial and office development, supporting amenities (i.e. hotels, entertainment, etc.), and community assets that would serve to attract visitors and potential employees

### LAND USE & AMENITIES

In order to attract skilled and young professionals, the New Century area must be equipped with amenities that can provide for the many needs of area employees. Because the area is suited for both light industrial and business offices, the City should implement the following strategies to cater to the mix of employees and industries:

- Support the development of restaurants, shops, and other employee-based amenities between the New Century Industrial Park and Main Street
- Encourage on-site trail connections that link to local and regional trail networks throughout the Gardner planning area



## INTERMODAL INDUSTRIAL

Located in Edgerton but adjacent to Gardner's southwestern border, the Logistics Park Kansas City (LPKC) Intermodal Facility serves as a 1,000-acre intermodal anchor for surrounding warehousing and distribution development. While the LPKC Intermodal Facility itself is not within Gardner city limits, the City can take advantage of its close proximity to the facility by encouraging complimentary uses near the site.

In order to support future industrial development in the Intermodal Industrial area, the City should consider the following actions:

- Annex emerging industrial corridors that are well-positioned to take advantage of the LPKC Intermodal Facility
- Establish a long-term capital improvement plan to provide appropriate infrastructure to future industrial development areas
- Review and amend the municipal code to require additional landscape buffers and screening where industrial areas abut residential uses, streams, and floodplains
- Install streetscape along major arterials in order to convey a positive image throughout all areas of Gardner
- Safely integrate trail connections within industrial and warehousing developments
- Designate local truck routes to maximize access to interstates and minimize impacts of truck traffic on residential neighborhoods



## LOCAL INDUSTRIAL

Gardner includes several smaller pockets of manufacturing and light industrial operations that have a close relationship to adjacent residential or commercial areas. Many of these industrial areas represent the oldest industrial development in the City as they are located along the original rail corridor. These areas require unique strategies to ensure that they remain vital, and do not negatively impact nearby uses.

## IMPACT MITIGATION

Several Local Industrial areas are located at the edge of residential neighborhoods. Industrial areas can negatively impact residents through issues of noise, light, and other nuisances associated with industrial operations. To mitigate potential impacts of local industrial areas, the City should:

- Where possible, encourage and support relocation of industrial uses, especially ones that are no longer reliant on rail access, and identify funding sources related to site clean-up and redevelopment
- Review and amend the Landscape Ordinance to require industrial areas to provide landscaped buffers and screening between residential areas, if such uses are located across a public right-of-way and if the residential parcel already includes screening
- Require outdoor assembly and storage areas to be screened or enclosed
- Require appropriate siting and screening of truck loading docks to minimize visual impacts and idling noise
- Designate and enforce local truck routes to minimize impacts of industrial traffic on residential neighborhoods

## INDUSTRIAL BUFFERS

Areas of the Land Use Plan include light industrial areas that are sited adjacent to residential areas. In order to mitigate potential impacts of new industrial development to residential neighborhoods, these industrial areas require a higher level of buffering. To reduce impacts to residential areas, the City should:

- Create wide green space buffers between industrial and residential areas
- Consider utilizing industrial buffers as neighborhood greenways and/or public open space areas

# CITY OF GARDNER INDUSTRIAL AREAS PLAN

- New Century Area - Office/Industrial
- Inter-Modal Industrial
- Local Industrial
- Logistics Park Kansas City Intermodal Facility
- Southeast Quadrant Market Determined Growth Area
- Buffering
- Municipal Boundaries

