



# City of Arkansas City

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

### AGENDA

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**Tuesday, February 08, 2022 at 5:30 PM — 400 W. Madison Ave., Arkansas City, KS**

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**GoTo Meeting:** <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/954781845> or call +1 (646) 749-3122  
**Access Code:** 954 781 845

#### **Call to Order**

#### **Roll Call**

#### **Public Comments**

*Persons who wish to address the Planning Commission regarding items not on the agenda. Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes. Any presentation is for information purposes only. No action will be taken.*

#### **Consent Agenda**

- [1.](#) Meeting Minutes, **January 11, 2022 meeting.**

#### **Consideration**

- [2.](#) Recommend representatives to other boards

#### **Comprehensive Plan**

- [3.](#) Comprehensive Plan discussion

#### **Other Items**

#### **Adjournment**



# City of Arkansas City

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

### MINUTES

**Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 5:30 PM — 400 W Madison Ave, Arkansas City, KS**

#### Call to Order

#### Roll Call

PRESENT: Mary Benton, Lloyd Colston, Paisley Howerton, Brandon Jellings, Ian Kuhn, Kyle Lewis, Cody Richardson, Joni Spicer, Tom Wheatley

Staff present at roll call were Principal Planner Josh White and Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson.

Also present at roll call were Dr. Ron Ballard and Wes Pfannenstiel representing USD 470; David Brazil representing Community Health Center in Cowley County; Mayor Canyon Gingher; and citizens Ken Harader and Robert Nicholas.

#### Declaration

*At this time, Planning Commission members are asked to make a declaration of any conflict of interest or of any Ex parte or outside communication that might influence their ability to hear all sides on any item on the agenda so they might come to a fair decision.*

No such declarations were made by Planning Commissioners.

#### Public Comments

*Persons who wish to address the Planning Commission regarding items not on the agenda. Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes. Any presentation is for information purposes only. No action will be taken.*

Robert Nicholas of 822 S 1st Street spoke of the noise ordinance. He asked that it be reviewed. He was informed that the Planning Commission could not take any action on this item at this meeting but to ask to be placed on the agenda for another meeting. *[Secretary's Note: This request is outside of the purview of this body. Staff will recommend he approach the City Commission for action.]*

#### Consent Agenda

1. Meeting Minutes, **December 14, 2021 meeting.**

Motion made by Colston, Seconded by Spicer to approve the minutes as written.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

#### Consideration

2. Elect a chair and vice-chair for 2022

Motion made by Spicer, Seconded by Richardson to appoint Ian Kuhn as Chair for 2022.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

Motion made by Kuhn, Seconded by Colston to appoint Tom Wheatley as Vice-Chair for 2022.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

#### Public Hearings

3. Hold a public hearing to consider the advisability of rezoning 600 S B Street from a P (Public Use District) to a C-1 (Office and Service Business District).

Motion made by Colston, Seconded by Benton to open the public hearing.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley  
 White presented the staff report. He said the property was originally zoned P because in 2014, the property was still being used as a school. This rezoning is now necessary because the proposed use is no longer public. The project is to create a health center in the building. The sale is contingent on the rezone being approved. The building has been vacant since 2016. The proposed project will also provide enhanced public health in the area, a goal in the Comprehensive Plan. Properties with frontage along Madison Ave are often commercial. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning as it is compatible with the area and is a similar use to what was previously there. Kuhn asked about the operation of the clinic. Brazil stated it would be a daytime clinic on weekdays. This is a primary care facility not an urgent care. Wheatley asked for clarification on how long it has been vacant and asked about parking availability. Brazil said there is a parking lot at the northwest portion of the site. He said long term the parking would likely be expanded but he felt the current parking complied with zoning regulations. He did note that there would probably be street parking on B Street due to the configuration of the existing building. Jellings asked if this was a tax exempt entity. Brazil and White confirmed that this is a non-profit institution. Colston asked how many staff would be on site. Brazil said at full staffing would be about 20. Kuhn felt that access to health centers was certainly a positive but did have some concerns about parking. Brazil noted that additional parking can be added but most could be on site.

Motion made by Colston, Seconded by Spicer to close the public hearing.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

Motion made by Colston, Seconded by Wheatley to recommend that the City Commission approve the request to rezone at 600 S B Street from a P, Public Use District to a C-1, Office and Service Business District.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

Voting Nay: Jellings

Kuhn declared the motion passed 8-1.

## **Comprehensive Plan**

### **4. Comprehensive Plan discussion**

White started discussion of land use. Richardson asked if White could give an overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan process for the benefit of the new members. White briefly described the process of the plan and its purpose. He then discussed the changes made to the draft since the last meeting. He discussed proposed changes to the zoning regulations as well as to the future land use map. He noted that these weren't specific changes just recommendations that the zoning regulations be amended to better reflect the current situation. That process would occur after the Comprehensive Plan was adopted. White also asked for input on how to better get public input. Jellings suggested that certain questions could be posed on social media and the responses be used. He specifically suggested a non-City page be used as people tended to be more open there but staff and Planning Commissioners could see what the people's thoughts were. White said staff could look into that and other options. White then led a discussion about the future land use map. He noted the issues and suggested various changes.

## **Adjournment**

Motion made by Colston, Seconded by Wheatley.

Voting Yea: Benton, Colston, Howerton, Jellings, Kuhn, Lewis, Richardson, Spicer, Wheatley

Kuhn declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.



# Planning Commission Agenda Item

**Meeting Date:** 2/8/22  
**From:** Josh White, Principal Planner  
**Item:** Appoint representatives to other boards

**Purpose:** Recommend representatives to other boards

**Background:**

A couple of reorganization items were not addressed at the last meeting. We need to recommend representatives to other boards.

The Traffic Safety Committee meets quarterly and the Planning Commission has one representative. Ian Kuhn was appointed to fill Andy Paton's position on that board in October. Staff recommends keeping him as the representative.

The Historic Preservation Board meets monthly or as-needed and the Planning Commission has one representative. Charles Jennings was the former Planning Commission representative and this person would be filling his vacated seat through February 1, 2023.

**Action:**

Make a motion to recommend a representative to the Traffic Safety Committee

Make a motion to recommend a representative to the Historic Preservation Board

**Attachments:**

None



# Planning Commission Agenda Item

**Meeting Date:** 2/8/22  
**From:** Josh White, Principal Planner  
**Item:** Comprehensive Plan discussion

**Purpose:** Comprehensive Plan discussion

**Background:**

We have discussed each of the Chapters from the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. The next step is to go back through each one and finalize drafts. Tonight I hope to get Chapters 1 & 2. In the following months we will likely try to tackle one topic each meeting. The main focus will be creating actionable and measurable goals. I will have drafts available at the meeting each time. We may not go in the exact Chapter order as a couple of the topics (Transportation and Parks) have their own plans. Once all Chapters have approved drafts, we will set a public hearing and hopefully that will be sometime this summer. As noted during the discussion on land use, amendments to the zoning and subdivision regulations will follow adoption of this plan however, I think we may take a couple months break between them.

We will also provide an update on our public outreach and surveying.

**Action:**

Hold discussion, approve the draft Chapters

**Attachments:**

2013 Comprehensive plan Chapter 1-2

## Chapter One: Introduction

- 1.1 Purpose of a Comprehensive Plan
- 1.2 Goals and Actions
- 1.3 Arkansas City History
- 1.4 Population: Trends and Projections
- 1.5 Overview to Recent Plans, Reports and Surveys Used in the ~~2013~~2021 Plan

Comment [JW1]: 2020

### 1.1 PURPOSE

The overall community goal for planning is to provide for the optimum in public health, safety and welfare for all residents of Arkansas City, and to simultaneously recognize and safeguard individual rights and vested property interests.

A comprehensive plan expresses a community's desires about the future. The plan provides a foundation and framework for future decisions and actions which affect the growth and development of property within the city's jurisdiction.

Planning is a basic function and power of city governments in Kansas. Planning commissions and governing bodies prepare plans in order to preserve the public health, safety and welfare. Effective planning helps make possible the orderly development of land within the planning jurisdiction of the city.

Cities plan for a variety of reasons:

- **To protect the public and preserve quality of life**

Planning can provide a wide number of benefits to a community. Effective planning can reduce problems such as incompatible land uses and can facilitate efficiency and economy by encouraging development to occur in areas with existing or planned public infrastructure.

- **To develop community vision and achieve goals**

The creation and adoption of a comprehensive plan provides the blueprint a community needs to realize its shared vision for the future. An effective planning process engages the public and builds on the strengths of the community. The comprehensive plan is more than just a list of goals and values, however. It is also a roadmap that allows the community to work to achieve these goals through specific land use policies and actions.

- **To protect private property rights**

Too often, planning is seen as infringing on, rather than enhancing, private property rights. While city land use regulations like zoning may place limits on the types of uses an individual landowner can make of his or her land, those regulations are, at their core, intended to *protect* the property rights of *all* landowners within the community. Striking the balance between individual liberties and the public good is critical to every land use planning effort.

- **To encourage economic development**

Orderly planning can have an important and direct positive impact upon a community's economic development. It provides the kind of certainty and predictability that developers, lending institutions and business owners seek. Planning can help outline the future capital improvements and infrastructure a community needs in order to grow, and can help identify the means to finance these infrastructure needs. Good planning can also ensure that sufficient land is available for employee housing and new business development.

- **To facilitate decisionmaking on land use**

Land use decisionmaking by local governments is made in accordance with comprehensive plans, zoning and other land use regulations. Good land use planning is proactive in nature and helps prevent accusations that land use decisions have been made in an arbitrary or capricious manner. In the absence of planning, land use decisions can appear to be haphazard, even unfair. Good planning furthers sound decisionmaking.

The Kansas statute which sets out the requirements for a city comprehensive plan offers a concise statement of the purpose which a plan is to serve: The comprehensive plan

"...shall constitute the basis or guide for public action to insure a coordinated and harmonious development or redevelopment which will best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare as well as wise and efficient expenditure of public funds."

K.S.A. 12-747(c)

This comprehensive plan has a number of characteristics which are common to comprehensive plans of other communities. First, it is a *physical plan*. Although a reflection of social and economic values, the plan is fundamentally a guide to the physical development of the community. It translates values into a scheme that describes how, why, when, and where to build, rebuild or preserve the community.

A second characteristic of this plan that is common to other plans is that it is *long range*, covering a time period greater than one year. This plan expresses current policies that

are meant to help shape the future of Arkansas City. A good plan challenges and inspires a community, and its citizens, with a vision of what might be, possibly a bit idealistic with hopes and dreams.

A third characteristic of this plan is that it is *comprehensive*. It not only covers the entire city geographically, it also encompasses all the functions that makes Arkansas City work, such as transportation, housing, land use, utility systems, and recreation. Moreover, the plan considers the interrelationships of those functions.

Fourth, the plan is a statement of policy, covering such community desires as quantity, character, location, and rate of growth (be it no growth, slow growth, rapid growth, or decline) and indicating how these desires can be achieved.

Finally, the plan is a guide to decision making by the Planning Commission, the Governing Body and city staff.

## 1.2 GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Most of the chapters in this Plan have a heading, "Goals and Actions" recommended to be adopted and undertaken by the City. Each term, "goal," and "action", has a distinct meaning and purpose, described as follows:

**Goals** articulate long-range aspirations of Arkansas City. They are ends to be sought, and achieved.

**Actions** set out specific steps to be taken in furtherance of achieving the Plan's goals. Actions are usually discrete, measurable steps which can be undertaken as part of the implementation of the Plan.

## 1.3 ARKANSAS CITY HISTORY

1601 - Spanish conquistador Juan de Oñate led 70 soldiers from New Mexico to Kansas seeking gold in the fabled land of Quivira. He was the last of the conquistadors and hoped for better luck than his predecessor, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado, who had visited Quivira settlements 60 years earlier and found no gold. Oñate and his men did not find gold either. But they encountered a sprawling town of ancestral Wichita people on the lower banks of the Walnut River near its confluence with the Arkansas River, at what is now Arkansas City. A Quivira native taken captive by the Spanish soldiers identified the town as Etzanoa. The explorers called it "the great settlement" and "this heavenly land." They estimated the town's population at 20,000, making it one of the largest pre-Columbian settlements in North America. Etzanoa was located south of a string of other, smaller Wichita settlements in central Kansas that Coronado had visited in 1541. Oñate and his soldiers did not visit those settlements. Their visit to

**Comment [JW2]:** This section on Etzanoa provided by Foss Farrar

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Etzanoa was cut short when an enemy tribe attacked. After a battle with many casualties, the Spanish decided to return to New Mexico after only three days.

**1872-1890s** - Arkansas City was incorporated in 1872, the second city in Cowley County. According to Cutler's History of the State of Kansas, the population of the City in 1870 was 214 and in 1880 it was 1,799. Tribal land from the Osage was opened for settlement in July of 1870. The first building was a log house and the second a hardware store. The first general store was opened in 1870, and the first newspaper was printed. To get ready for the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad, a saw mill was constructed as well. The first water works was installed in 1881 with spring water pumped to a reservoir in the southern portion of the City. Arkansas City was founded in 1870 and incorporated as a city in Cowley County, Kansas, in 1872. According to Cutler's History of the State of Kansas, the population of the City in 1870 was 214 and in 1880 it was 1,799. Tribal land from the Osage was opened for settlement in July 1870. The first building in the settlement was a log house and the first store was a general store that came from Emporia. In August 1870, C.M. Scott published the first newspaper, the Traveler. He noted that there already were 12 houses and 38 business buildings on the new townsite. To get ready for the arrival of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe on December 31, 1879, a water sawmill and flour mill were constructed. By 1881, the town had its own waterworks, with spring water pumped to a reservoir in the southern portion of the City. Arkansas City improved its downtown commercial district rapidly in the 1880s, building several handsome brick and stone buildings on South Summit Street between Adams and Fifth Avenues. Business growth also occurred along Fifth and Central Avenues.

**Comment [JW3]:** Edits provided by Foss Farrar



Photos by William S. Prettyman, noted frontier photographer based in Arkansas City.

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**Land Runs** - One of the most significant events in the history of the community was the Land Run of 1889 for land in Oklahoma. Being a railroad town, the City was a gathering point for thousands of people preparing for the run. It was estimated more than 100,000

~~people attempted to claim some part of the 8,000,000 acres of land. In 1893 the coveted Cherokee Strip was opened, again to many, many settlers hoping to make their lives better during an economic downturn. The Cherokee Strip Land Rush Museum located in Arkansas City sits on the actual "Strip" and documents this significant time. Arkansas City was the largest departure point for the Cherokee Strip land rush of 1893. More than 100,000 people made the run south from the Kansas border to the Cherokee outlet or "strip," roughly 58 by 150 miles. According to the Cherokee Strip Land Rush Museum, between 75,000 and 100,000 had registered in Ark City alone to make the run. The town's population had increased to between 50,000 and 100,000 people in the days before the run. Several years earlier, in 1889, Arkansas City also was a principal departure point for the land rush into the "Unassigned Lands" of Oklahoma.~~

**Comment [JW4]:** Edits provided by Foss Farrar

The following was originally published in the 1964<sup>43</sup> Arkansas City Comprehensive Plan, prepared by Harland Bartholomew and Associates. This is only an excerpt from that original document which was reprinted in its entirety in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan.

**1910-1920s** - Between 1910 and 1930, the town continued to boom with the discovery of oil in Cowley County. The first refinery was constructed in 1917 and another in 1923. The economy of the town grew on the bounties of the land. The land provided wheat, so the flour mills grew; the land provided oil, so the oil industry grew; and the land grew fertile feed for cattle, so that the meat package industry grew. Location near the rivers produced water for the people and its industries, but the great flood of 1923 severely damaged the low-lying sections and brought about a continuing awareness of the need for protection in the river valleys. A considerable amount of land was platted in very small lots during the oil boom of the 20's. Much of this has never been developed....The flood of 1923 also resulted in low, flat areas of town being "marked" as bad investments. It was during the 1920's that public and private interest constructed the initial levee to prevent flooding.

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**1930-1950s** - The oil boom, which reached its peak in 1925, tapered off in the late 20's and 30's, but the population remained relatively stable through World War II, being supported by trade and other industries. Immediately prior to World War II, the cities of Winfield and Arkansas City arranged for the purchase of land for construction of an airport (Strother Field). During the War, the U.S. Air Force leased the land and developed the field as a training base. It was returned to the cities a short time later. The discovery of oil on one of these in 1954 has provided money for the upkeep of airport facilities and development of land adjacent to the field for industrial purposes.

**1960-1990s** - Between 1960 and 1990, Arkansas City experienced a gradual loss of population, a high of 14,262 in 1960 to 13,201 persons in 1980...The

town experienced the improvement and widening of Highway 77, which contributed to Summit Street being developed as a retail corridor. In addition to the traditional highway-oriented business activities, corporate franchise served and retail business lined both sides of the highway. Downtown Arkansas City also experienced changes...retail activities were displaced by the retail conversion of Summit Street. However, the downtown remained the primary location for finance and specialty retail shops. A primary concern of community leaders was the renovation of older downtown buildings. The downtown went through a revitalization project to increase parking and beautify the public space by improving the sidewalks and planting trees. Residential development on large lots occurred on the east side of the Walnut River beyond the flood plain, north and south of Highway 166. The scattering of residential development on the outskirts of Arkansas City was a growing trend within the urban area. The most visible area of this activity was south of the Arkansas River in the Bolton community area...substantial activity east of town in the Crestwood subdivision...[and] individual home sites were developed along county roads surrounding the city. The Goff Industrial Park, located on the north edge of town, was platted and initially developed in 1982. Community leaders recognized the need to attract new industry to town, and broaden the economic base.



The 1990s and early 2000s did present serious economic losses to the community. Morrell Meats and the Total Petroleum refinery closed. Large businesses elsewhere in the County, employing many members of the community, also left, including Binney & Smith and Winfield State Hospital.

While the number of jobs lost was large, and their payrolls important to the local economy, new businesses have moved in, and others have expanded. Creekstone Farms Premium Beef LLC employing over 700 people, is the largest example of this renewed growth.

Among other 2000-era events in Arkansas City were the ongoing renovation of the Burford Theatre, new investment in the downtown streetscape, and the construction of the South Central Kansas Regional Medical Center, which opened in 2011.

#### 1.4 POPULATION: TRENDS AND PROJECTIONS

Since the 1960s the population of Arkansas City has stagnated, although it is encouraging to see slight growth in some years. National, state and regional economic downturns have each contributed to the population counts. Locally the loss of several prominent businesses having good-paying jobs in the past 20 years has been detrimental to growth. However, new and expanded businesses in the past 10 or so years has taken some of the sting out of those losses. Still the public's awareness of those losses is reflected in the many comments on the 2013 community survey which addressed the need for more, and better paying, jobs to enable citizens to stay in the community, and to attract new people to Arkansas City. Arkansas City has continued to experience growth through 2020 in jobs primarily due to Creekstone Farms and Kan-Pak but lack of housing has deterred some potential new residents from moving to the City.

#### POPULATION PROJECTIONS, KANSAS WATER OFFICE

~~The most recent population projections published by the Kansas Water Office were released in April 2002. In that year the 2010 projected population was 11,512. The 2010 U.S. Census counted 12,415 members of the community. Other population projections by the Water Office, also in 2002, were: 2020 – 10,946; 2030 – 10,380; and 2040 – 9,814.~~

The most recent population projections for the Arkansas City-Winfield Micropolitan Statistical Area (essentially Cowley County) as conducted by Wichita State University Center for Economic Development and Business Research show that the area will see population growth of 1.398% through 2020, 0.871% 2021-2025, and 0.196% 2026-2030. The projection then shows declines starting in the next five years and steady declines of approximately 2% for each 5 year period through 2070. No population projections specific to Arkansas City were available.

**Comment [JW5]:** This is my opinion but it seems a pretty decent conclusion. If we have any comments from our new surveys related to this, we could remove the reference to the 2013 Community Survey.

**Comment [JW6]:** This information is out of date. I cannot find any projections from the Kansas Water Office

**Comment [JW7]:** This needs some editing.

#### POPULATION, U.S. CENSUS 1960-2020

1960	14,262	+10.5%
1970	13,216	-7.3%
1980	13,201	-0.1%
1990	12,762	-3.3%
2000	11,963	-6.3%
2010	12,415	+3.8%
<u>2020</u>	<u>11,974</u>	<u>-3.55%</u>

### THE 2020 FEDERAL CENSUS

Several of the following chapters provide data obtained from the 2020 U.S. Census relating to specific topics, such as housing and employment. A quick overview to the 2020 Census will help the reader form a picture of the community:

Arkansas City has ~~increased~~ in population from ~~41,963~~12,415 in 2010 to 12,415 in 2020. It is largely believed that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and some political factors that there was an undercount in this Census, but to what degree is difficult to ascertain. Arkansas City will look ahead to the 2030 Census by continuing to focus on economic development and increasing the supply of housing.

While Household data from 2020 wasn't immediately available, the 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates provide reasonable data that can be used as a substitute. In 2019, there were 4,802,641 households and 3,030,782 families residing in 5,646 housing units. The 2020 Census reported a total of 5,382 housing units of which 4,467 were occupied and 915 were vacant. The City's racial mix was 79.46% White alone, 3.93% Black or African-American alone, 2.73% American Indian and Alaska Native alone, 0.46% Asian alone, 0.74% Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 8.47% from other races and 4.61% from two or more races. The Hispanic or Latino population, which has grown significantly in recent years, stood at 17.32%.

In 2019, Median age of citizens was 33.84 years, and as the following table shows, there were more females (51.75%) than males (48.34%). The table also shows that persons under age 18 made up only 26.42% of the population, while those aged 18-24 were 12.71%, aged 25-44 were 23.32%, aged 45-64 were 22.72% and citizens over 65 made up 14.81% of the total population. Based on this information it is clear that we are an aging community.

Also available in the 2019 American Community Survey 5 year Estimates, some of the characteristics of housing in Arkansas City were an average household size of 2.47 persons, and an average family size of 3.07. The 4,802,641 households included 43.44% married couples living together, 36.94% were non-families and 31.93% were households comprised of individuals living alone. At the ends of the population continuum, 33.8% of the households had children under age 18, and 13.61% had a person 65 years or older who was living alone.

**Comment [JW8]:** Much of this data will likely be derived from the 2019 ACS 5 year estimates as the 2020 Census information will not be available in time to complete this plan

**Comment [JW9]:** This table may be left out if 2020 data cannot be obtained in time.

#### RESIDENTS OF ARKANSAS CITY AGE AND GENDER 1990:2010

	1990		2000		2010	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
0-4	447	435	427	416	526	485
5-9	427	382	435	432	462	447

10-14	550	523	419	436	402	430
15-17	265	278	248	259	253	276
18-24	583	560	653	689	788	786
25-29	491	391	341	357	411	396
30-39	899	991	740	728	692	691
40-49	636	671	716	756	741	738
50-59	537	652	597	712	705	716
60-69	543	719	423	535	512	629
70-79	470	604	380	545	294	414
80+	213	495	230	489	205	416
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6,061</b>	<b>6,701</b>	<b>5,609</b>	<b>6,354</b>	<b>5,991</b>	<b>6,424</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	33.0	38.0	34.2	38.2	32.0	35.6

Source: U.S. Census



## 1.5 OVERVIEW TO RECENT PLANS, REPORTS AND SURVEYS USED IN THE ~~2013~~ 2021 PLAN

The ~~2013~~ 2021 Comprehensive Plan for Arkansas City was built on a foundation of three sources of information:

First this Plan enjoys the benefit of being the successor to several earlier-adopted comprehensive plans. The findings and recommendations of the last complete plan (~~1996~~ 2013) ~~as well as some from earlier plans and updates to that plan~~ were noted and considered in the making of the ~~2013~~ 2021 Plan. There are many valuable aspects of the earlier plans, and this Plan endeavors to keep those aspects alive by referencing them in the text of the following chapters and by providing excerpts in an appendix. All too often comprehensive plans have a short utilization period, followed by a long shelf life. The citizens and city officials involved in the making of the ~~2013~~ 2021 Plan resolved not to let valuable information, and adopted goals and actions, be lost to history. Almost all of the goals and appropriate actions are measurable so that we can see how we are progressing.

Second the Plan also benefitted from a number of well-done and recent community surveys and studies. Those surveys and studies are also cited throughout this Plan, ~~including surveys conducted in 2007 and 2010, a housing needs assessment published in 2010, the U.S. Highway 77 Corridor study, and an extensive study undertaken by Cowley First titled, "The Vision 20/20 Community Plan." and are too numerous to list here but will be cited throughout the document and used as appendices to this plan.~~

Third, ~~and most important to the approach of this Plan,~~ is a series of community surveys conducted in early 2013 through a platform called FlashVote. FlashVote is an online survey program that allows users to opt in and get results within 48 hours of the survey closing. An extensive survey document was mailed out to water customers, and also made available on-line. The results of the surveys were central to the recommendations for goals and actions found in this Plan. An earnest attempt was made to maintain consistency and compatibility between the survey results and those goals and actions. This is a community plan, and is based more than anything else on what the community said ~~in the 2013 survey throughout the process.~~

This plan also includes a new section in each Chapter summarizing the accomplishments since the 2013 Plan and celebrates its successes. The Planning Commission wished to show the successes to demonstrate how far the community has come since the last update.

The information from all three resources was assimilated and analyzed by citizens in the form of the ~~Plan's Steering Committee~~ various city boards, including the Beautification and Tree Advisory Board, the Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Advisory Board, the Historic Preservation Board, the Traffic Safety Committee and the Planning Commission and then finally the City Commission. Their collective efforts -- to study data, consider

opinion<sup>s</sup> and apply their own experiences and knowledge of the community -- resulted in the following chapters.



## **Chapter Two: Community Character**

- 2.1 Introduction**
- 2.2 Vision**
- 2.3 Community Character - People & Community Events**
- 2.4 Community Survey Results**
- 2.5 Social Institutions**
- 2.6 Education Institutions**
- 2.7 Other Community Institutions**
- 2.8 Religious Institutions**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Community character is unique to each city. It is comprised of many elements including social institutions, events, built spaces, and demographics. The actions of leaders and citizens influence whether the needs of the community are identified, and how those needs are addressed. Actions that are taken, and those which are not, in and of themselves also serve to define the character of the community.

### **2.2 VISION**

The members of the community along with its institutions, private organizations, and government, will work together to preserve and enhance the unique and diverse character of Arkansas City to ensure the qualities that individuals and families are looking for, including good education, a safe environment and the ability to form and develop meaningful relationships.

### **2.3 COMMUNITY CHARACTER - PEOPLE & COMMUNITY EVENTS**

Arkansas City is a mid-size community having both a rural and urban character. Many people enjoy living in a community the size of Arkansas City and seek communities like Arkansas City where they can know each other, and feel safe. They enjoy the benefits of a community with historical buildings and small town amenities and culture. Arkansas City fits this bill with an attractive downtown center, a thriving commercial corridor through town, industrial partners, good schools and excellent opportunities to enjoy natural and cultural resources. Many people would like their communities to have the atmosphere which Arkansas City has, while still being very accessible to metropolitan areas such as Wichita.

Special events bring community members together, and contribute to the culture and character of the city. Events celebrated community-wide in Arkansas City include ~~the Eagle Watch, Mountain Man Encampment, Prairie Fest, Renaissance Festival, Halfalalah, Tacolalah,~~ Arkalalah, and Last Run Car Show. ~~Along the river banks in late January and early February one can spot bald eagles.~~ Arkalalah, a Native American word that means “good times”, is the largest annual community festival. It has been celebrated in Arkansas City since 1928.



**Comment [JW1]:** I need an updated list of events to ensure this section is correct.

**Comment [JW2]:** Photos need credits, or be retaken.

The Car Show is another favorite annual event in the community, with as many as 1000 antique and styled cars on display. ~~The Cherokee Strip Renaissance Festival is a newer event, first held in 2008. It is held in August and takes place in the northern part of Arkansas City around a local hotel, sparking the imagination of young and old to the time of King Arthur, featuring jousting and dragons.~~

**Comment [JW3]:** To the best of my knowledge this event has been discontinued.

Entertainment options exist in Arkansas City, and are frequently found at the historic Burford Theater and the Brown Center at Cowley College. Those facilities provide a range of theater and performing arts experiences. The Brown Center holds 800 people, and among the national speakers and entertainers who appear there are Grammy Award winners and other notable acts and persons. The Burford is a 900-seat auditorium ~~which at this time is undergoing that was~~ restored with a \$4.2 million restoration enabled through private fundraising. This effort is further testimony to the value the Burford has for the community. These two venues also create opportunities for tourism.

Like many communities in Kansas, holidays and other community celebrations become common experience for citizens, connecting them to each other across differing backgrounds, ages and interests. In Arkansas City there are community band concerts in the summer, bike runs spring through fall, a youth fishing derby, farm and art markets, home, garden and craft shows, event luncheons and banquets. Holiday celebrations include Easter egg hunts, parades, and the festival of trees and a miniature village on display at Christmas time.

Arkansas City was home to former Kansas Governor Robert Docking. Professional sports figures include Darren Daulton (baseball), Lionel Hollins (basketball), and Leslie Miller, (football) who were born in Arkansas City. Another notable former resident was actress Elizabeth Taylor, who lived in the community for one summer as a child.

## 2.4 COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

In the results of the FlashVote survey conducted in ~~2013~~2021, citizens were asked to consider quality of life and to identify their most important reasons for living in Arkansas City. The response most often given illustrated the importance of relationshipsfeeling safe, as it was “~~the location (is) near to family and friendsphysical safety, security~~”. The second most-cited response was “friendly and small town atmospheresense of community/small town feel”, again demonstrating qualities Arkansas City has which many people seek.

When asked in the 20132021 Needs & Priorities FlashVote survey to respond to a question regarding community development, involvement and relationships, the results were:

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	TOTAL RESPONSES
A.	I'm willing to work with my neighbors to make our community a good place to live	1%	4%	20%	51%	27%	690
B.	My neighbors are willing to work with me to make our community a good place to live	5%	6%	43%	34%	12%	679
C.	Our community is open and accepting to people of all backgrounds	3%	12%	33%	40%	12%	686
D.	Racial prejudice is present in the community	7%	21%	36%	25%	11%	683
E.	I support a community commitment to diversity and engagement of different ethnicities/people	4%	4%	39%	35%	18%	685
F.	More bilingual written communication is needed throughout the community	23%	25%	33%	12%	7%	629

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Options	Votes (115)
Cost and availability of housing	26.1% (30)
Employment opportunities	21.7% (25)
Sense of community/"small town feel"	65.2% (75)
Physical safety and security	66.1% (76)
Overall community appearance	16.5% (19)
Shopping/restaurant options	7.8% (9)
Access to recreation/amenities	32.2% (37)
Local arts and cultural offerings	31.3% (36)
Other:	7.8% (9)

**Comment [JW4]:** Not sure of the best format for displaying these results. Open to ideas.

~~It appears many felt individually they were willing to work to make Arkansas City a better place (78%), but were less positive about their neighbors' willingness to do the same (46%).~~

~~While many agreed the community was open and accepting for people of all backgrounds (52%), others (36%) saw racial prejudice in the community.~~

~~One conclusion that could be drawn is that community relationships are very important to the residents of Arkansas City, but improving these relationships, in particular working together to make the city better and building support for diversity, is a necessary and worthy effort.~~

~~The survey also asked about priorities. Respondents gave the greatest support to "Local business development/growth" while maintaining infrastructure and keeping up the community appearance also gained a lot of support.~~

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Options	Votes (115)
Local business development/growth	86.1% (99)
Reducing homelessness	9.6% (11)
More recreational options/programs	28.7% (33)
Improved street/sidewalk infrastructure	58.3% (67)
More affordable housing	37.4% (43)
Overall community appearance/aesthetics	53.0% (61)
Reducing crime	27.8% (32)
Maintaining water/sewer/stormwater infrastructure	58.3% (67)
Other:	4.3% (5)

**Comment [JW5]:** Again, not the best format but this is a placeholder.

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~~Other questions asked had similar results. An open ended question was also asked. The full results are included as an appendix to this Plan.~~

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**Comment [JW6]:** Specify which one, when decided. Might word this section a bit better as well. There were plenty of other questions but I didn't feel it necessary to point out each one. A word cloud for the final question might make a good addition though.

## 2.5 SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

### **Government**

Citizens are represented by five elected commissioners comprising the City Commission. Commissioners are elected at large, meaning they do not represent a specific area, but rather the whole community. The Mayor is elected annually by the commission, from the commission membership. The form of government is City Manager/Commission, and has been in place since 1930. The community is served by a professional manager who serves at the will of the City Commission, and who is responsible for the day to day management of the departments and staff of the city. The city employs approximately 130 persons among ~~five~~<sup>seven</sup> departments: ~~Administration~~ Environmental Services, ~~Finance~~ City Manager, ~~Parks & Facilities~~, Fire/EMS, ~~Municipal Court~~, Police, and Public ~~Works~~ Services. City Hall is located downtown at 118 W. Central Avenue.

### **Municipal Services**

The city provides water, wastewater, trash and recycling services to businesses and households in the community, as fee for service operations.

~~The city's Public Works department employs 44 people and has several divisions: Environmental Services, Neighborhood Services, and Public Services. Environmental Services is responsible for water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection, treatment and meter reading. Neighborhood Services is responsible for building maintenance and construction as well as code enforcement. Public Services is responsible for street maintenance, grading of ditches, storm drainage, and sanitation. Public Works is also responsible for maintaining Riverview Cemetery, located at the corner of 15<sup>th</sup> and Kansas.~~

~~In 2019, the Public Works Department was split into two separate departments, Environmental Services and Public Services. The Parks & Facilities Division was also combined with the Public Services Department. The Neighborhood Services Division was combined with the City Manager Department.~~

~~The Environmental Services Department is responsible for water treatment and distribution, wastewater collection, treatment and meter reading. Public Services is responsible for street maintenance, storm drainage, sanitation and cemetery maintenance as well as parks and facilities maintenance.~~

~~The City Manager Department provides utility billing, municipal court, information technology. It also houses the Neighborhood Services Division which is responsible for building maintenance and construction, code enforcement and animal control.~~ Arkansas City ~~recently has~~ adopted the ICC ~~2009~~<sup>15</sup> International Codes as its construction standards for remodeling and new construction projects. Current codes are: ~~2008~~<sup>14</sup> National Electric Code; ~~2009~~<sup>15</sup> International Building Code, Residential Code, Plumbing Code, Mechanical Code, Fuel Gas Code, Fire Code, Property Maintenance Code, Existing Building

Code, the Kansas Uniform Disaster Building Damage Assessment Inspection and Recovery Plan, and the 1997 Uniform Code for Abatement of Dangerous Buildings.

~~The Arkansas City police station is located across the street from City Hall at 117 W. Central. There are 38 persons who work for the department, including 26 certified officers, one of whom is a canine handler for "Lee", used for tracking and drug detection.~~

~~The police department is responsible for law enforcement duties including traffic safety, animal control, noise, crime investigation, record management and communications. The department is dedicated to the advancement of community policing and its demonstrated results in crime prevention. Some of the community initiatives include DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) for area school children, Neighborhood Watch programs, National Night Out, Night Eyes, and SAFE (Seatbelts Are For Everyone). Officers have a presence in schools as School Resource Officers as well as Crime Stoppers programs for middle and high schools. Raids OnLine (raidsonline.com) and ACTIPS provide an electronic method for citizens or others to report possible criminal activity and with Raids OnLine, citizens may also get more information about Neighborhood Watch.~~

~~The Arkansas City Police Department strives to develop comprehensive strategies to resolve public safety issues and enhance the quality of life for all segments of the community. An example is DDACTS, Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety, which identifies common areas where property crime and accidents are reported on a high frequency, then targeting patrol and presence activity to address the trends. One goal of the department has been to move 911 employees from City to a County managed department, which is slated for the summer of 2013. This move is funded by a ¼ cent sales tax, and creates an opportunity for a county wide record management system, serving all law enforcement in the county. The department has also been progressing in areas of professional development of the department members as well as succession planning.~~



The Arkansas City Police Department is located at 117 W. Central. There are 31 staff members who work for the department, including 27 certified officers and 4 non-sworn staff members. ACPD provides a wide range of police services to the community 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Sworn officers perform police services that include patrol, answering calls for service, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, traffic crash investigation and

**Comment [JW7]:** Photos need credit

**Comment [JW8]:** Update provided by the Police Department

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a host of public service activities. Non-sworn staff members provide the department with administrative assistance, records management and property/evidence storage.

The Arkansas City Police Department partners with the United School District 470 in Arkansas City to provide two School Resource Officers. They are assigned to the Middle School and High School. These officers provide prevention programming that includes D.A.R.E. which is taught in district 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades. The School Resource Officers also provide specialized programming to include National Night Out, New Year's Eve Party, and D.A.R.E. Camp.

The department also has a Mental Health Officer, who is responsible for conducting follow up and outreach to citizens suffering from mental health crisis. This position will also assist domestic violence victims with seeking local services that will positively impact their situations.

Our department values community interaction. "Connecting with the community, it's kind of our thing," best defines our approach to everyday policing. ACPD values independent decision making and problem solving strategies. Using a community oriented policing philosophy; our department has fostered strong partnerships with our schools, faith-based community, civic organizations, business community and citizens. We strongly believe that preventing crime is a community effort and it is our role, as the Police Department, to provide the information necessary to help our citizens take an active part in reducing crime and traffic crashes. Every member of the Arkansas City Police Department is committed to our Values, Mission and Promise.

### **Fire/EMS Protection**

Emergency response for medical calls or fire is by the City Fire/EMS department located at 115 South D Street. Its staff is comprised of 24 personnel. The Fire Protection Class for Arkansas City and its rural area depends upon location. The urban area rating is a very good 4, an indication of the department's quality firefighting capability, including staffing, equipment and water availability in Arkansas City. Portions of rRural areas are served by Cowley County Fire District No. 5 with a rating of 8B. This rating applies to properties beyond 1000 feet of a fire hydrant but within five road miles of the fire station.



The City Fire/EMS department provides ~~Type 1~~ advanced life support to the city and nearby rural areas of unincorporated Cowley County, along with portions of ~~Kay County (Oklahoma) and~~ Sumner County. It is staffed by paramedics and emergency medical technicians at all times, ~~to provide a~~

Comment [JW9]: Photo needs credit



~~broad range of emergency treatment, from cardiac life support to trauma care, along with intravenous medications.~~ In addition, the department has a technical rescue team to specialize in rescue incidents like confined space, building collapse, swift water or high angles rescue. ~~The department staff is part of the South Central Hazmat Response Team, funded by the State Fire Marshal's office.~~

~~The firefighting equipment available includes a large variety of equipment, dating in age from 1987 to 2006, including the newest aerial platform as well as engines, pumpers, tankers, and combination vehicles. There are also medic vehicles in the fleet.~~

~~Important objectives the department is working on and hopes to complete in the next five years include: upgrading standard operating guidelines for fire and EMS for best practices; a computerized accountability system; evaluating and re-evaluating the community's risk reduction program over the next several years, such as fire inspections, fire pre-plans for commercial buildings, and fire education.~~

### **Public Library**

The Arkansas City Public Library (ACPL) is located at 120 E 5th Avenue. It opened at that location in November 1980, with a significant renovation in the early 2000s. ~~The~~



~~Library sees as its mission enhancing individual and community life through the provision of resources and services to meet the changing needs of the community, including recreational, informational, and educational needs. Resources include reference materials, wireless access and computers, and DVD rental. A special program hosted at the library, through the Arkansas City Literacy Council, is a volunteer organization that provides free tutoring for English language skills and sessions to develop literacy. In addition, ACPL has partnered with the Cowley County Renn Memorial Library to offer e-books and e-audio books, and with the Workforce Center to assist in job searches. Other key partners include the Cherokee Strip Museum and the Chaplin Nature Center for history and nature programming for children and K-State Extension for special classes. Among the services and programs for adults are book clubs and genealogy. For youth, there is story time, topical classes and specialty programming provided for early childhood through teenagers. While libraries are often thought of as simply a place for books, and ACPL does have many books and periodicals available, it is far more than a depository; ACPL is a place where a community is built. The Library's mission is to provide library resources and services to meet the changing recreational, informational, and educational needs of the public, to~~

**Comment [JW10]:** Photo needs credit

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enhance individual and community life. As a recreational and popular materials library, materials of high interest and demand are provided to persons of all ages. As an information and reference library, answers and materials are provided to the questions of individuals of all ages. As an educational and learning center, support and assistance are provided to patrons who are pursuing both formal and independent learning.

**Comment [JW11]:** Provided by Mendy

## 2.6 EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Children and youth living within the local school district attend one of nine public schools operated by USD 470 for their education needs, from pre-school through 12th grade. In addition to public school, there are three private schools. Arkansas City is also home to Cowley College, a community college and vocational/technical school serving the post-secondary needs of over 6,000 students.

### **USD 470**

~~The board, superintendent, educators, and staff at USD 470 endeavor to provide excellence in teaching and learning, to create learning environments to enhance student outcomes and to prepare students for their future lives. The District has a very comprehensive Strategic Plan which is updated regularly. The plan includes goals in each of these topic areas: communication/involvement, facilities, quality staff, student achievement, graduate success, student life issues and technology. Highlights of USD 470's Strategic Plan include efforts to provide full-day kindergarten at every elementary location, upgrades and improvements for all technology applications and hardware, improvements and stronger funding for Gifted and Talented Education and district-wide site improvements for landscaping and design. There are 198 certified teachers in the district. Total enrollment of USD 470 for the 2012-13 school year was 2,770, including pre-kindergarten, and kindergarten through twelfth grade.~~

~~The voters in USD 470 in 2008 approved a \$35.8 million dollar bond issue for additions and renovations of all school buildings, technology updates, a new stadium at the high school and other sports complex improvements. This bond issue has funded improvements such as roofs and windows, mechanical systems, additional classrooms, renovated restrooms, ADA improvements, some parking, security technology, fiber-optics, and FEMA tornado shelters.~~

USD 470 Board of Education members, administrators, teachers, and staff members are committed to providing an excellent education for all students. The district strives to provide effective instructional leadership and quality learning environments to promote improved student outcomes. USD 470 holds high expectations for students and staff and shares with the community the

**Comment [JW12]:** Updated information for USD 470 provided by the District.

responsibility for preparing all students to live, work, and continue learning in an ever-changing world.

The district focuses on providing a well-rounded education that incorporates rigorous academic study, social-emotional learning and wellness, family involvement, and future-focused plans of study customized for each student. Other goals include maintaining facilities, encouraging open two-way communication, hiring and retaining quality staff, 1:1 technology integration, early childhood programs, and graduate success. Total enrollment of USD 470 for the 2020-2021 school year was 2,773 which includes students in Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade.

In 2008, USD 470 voters approved a \$35.8 million-dollar bond issue for additions and renovations of all school buildings, technology updates, a new stadium at the high school and other sports complex improvements. This bond issue also funded improvements such as HVAC systems, early childhood classrooms, ADA access, fiber-optics, and FEMA-approved storm shelters for both school and public use.

#### **Central-District Office**

The current administration office, located at 2545 Greenway was purchased in 2008. The building was ~~then~~recently remodeled for the offices of the superintendent and other administrative professionals.

**High School** — ~~Arkansas City High School's current facility was opened in January 1983 and is located at 1200 Radio Lane. School year 2012-13 enrollment was 779 students grades 9-12. The Arkansas City High School is very proud of its offerings in both academic opportunities and its eighteen student clubs and organizations. In 2001 State Assessments it received the Building Wide Standard of Excellence in Reading and in 2009 ACHS was named as one of ten "Breakthrough Schools" in the nation by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The average composite ACT score was 20.9, compared to the state average of 21.8. In the athletic department, the High School is a Class 5A school in sports in the Ark Valley Chisholm Trail — Division 2-League. The current Arkansas City High School facility opened in January 1983 and is located at 1200 W. Radio Lane. Students in grades 9-12 attend there and in 2020-2021, enrollment totaled 771. Arkansas City High School is very proud of its class offerings and its various opportunities for students to become involved in athletics, activities, and student organizations. The average composite ACT score in 2020-2021 was 17.8 (Arkansas City began testing a substantially larger percentage of students), so this average will improve over the next two to three years. A strong indicator of improvement is the graduation rate which moved upward from 77.4 percent in 2019 to 86 percent in 2020. For athletics, the High School is a Class 5A school in the Ark Valley Chisholm Trail —~~



**Comment [JW13]:** Photo needs credit

**Comment [JW14]:** Update provided by USD 470

Division 2 League. Competing against substantially larger school districts, ACHS teams consistently qualify for postseason competition in a number of sports. The ACHS activities program is large, offering broad opportunities in co-curricular experiences for students. Programs in the Arts are recognized statewide for a traditional standard of excellence and accomplishment.

**Middle School** – Arkansas City Middle School, located at 400 E. Kansas Avenue, opened in 1967 ~~with a recent renovation and was renovated~~ in 2010-11. ~~The school is in its second year of being a one-to-one school, meaning that students are provided either a laptop or iPad for use at school or home. There were 634 sixth, seventh and eighth grade students at the middle school for the 2012-13 school year. ACMS received eight standards of excellence after the 2011 state assessments and was one of six schools nationwide to achieve the 2011 Panasonic National School Change Award. Students in grades 6 through 8 attend middle school and in 2020-2021, enrollment totaled 660. The middle school offers a variety of academic, athletic, and activity opportunities for students to explore and find success. One popular offering is the KAY Club - a community service-oriented program focused on character-building, leadership training, and volunteer opportunities.~~

**Elementary Schools** – ~~There are six elementary schools (preschool through 5<sup>th</sup> grade) in USD 470. Adams Elementary is located at 1201 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street, with 290 students in 2012-13. G-4 Elementary had 81 enrolled students and is located at 11945 292<sup>nd</sup> Road, serving the east side of the community. Frances Willard Elementary is located at 201 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street and had an enrollment of 238 pre-kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students. IXL Elementary had an enrollment of 193 and is located in the southern~~



~~portion of the community at 6758 322<sup>nd</sup> Road. In the Northeast, Jefferson Elementary is located at 131 Osage Avenue and had 246 enrolled students. Roosevelt Elementary, at 300 North B Street, had a 2012-13 enrollment of 259. The Pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade elementary schools also serve as storm shelters for the community and are FEMA approved for such use. There are six elementary schools in USD 470. These schools house students in grades PreK through fifth, provide full-Kindergarten classes, and also serve as FEMA-approved storm shelters for the community. 2020-2021 enrollment for each site was as follows:~~



- Adams Elementary - 1201 North 10<sup>th</sup> Street - 284

Comment [JW15]: Update from USD 470

- C-4 Elementary - 11945 292<sup>nd</sup> Road (east of town) - 112
- Frances Willard Elementary - 201 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street - 248
- IXL Elementary - 6758 322<sup>nd</sup> Road (south of town) - 194
- Jefferson Elementary - 131 Osage Avenue - 275
- Roosevelt Elementary - 300 North B Street - 229

USD 470 has shown success in the classroom in multiple ways. NWEA student scores have shown continued progress. Additionally, achievement is noted in math, reading, and writing, as USD 470 has received several Challenge Awards. The district has seen improving graduation rates and the most recent statistics project the graduation rate to move above the 90% mark.

~~**USD 470 Elementary Academic Success** The district has shown success in the classroom in multiple ways. Scores from the Kansas State Assessments have improved for the past five years. In addition, achievement is noted in math, reading, and writing, as USD 470 has received several Standard of Excellence awards. The district has seen improving graduation rates and the most recent statistics available show that more than 90% of the students graduate.~~

### **Preschool Education**

~~Cowley County Head Start is located at the Lincoln Early Childhood Center at 600 South B Street, a building owned by USD 470. The Head Start program works with the most vulnerable children by addressing kindergarten readiness skills. The Preschool and Language Stimulation (PALS) Preschool program is also located at the Early Childhood Center. This program is geared to 3 and 4 year-olds and encourages skill improvement and self-expression appropriate to the child's development level. In addition, the school district provides support for Parents as Teachers, an early childhood parent education program for children through age five, with play groups at Adam Elementary. This program had 64 enrolled in 2012-13. In 2017, USD 470 formally transitioned to a blended PreK model. The Ark City PreK office is housed at Adams Elementary but each elementary school provides PreK classes. All 4-year-olds in USD 470 are afforded the opportunity to enroll in the district's PreK program for free. Enrollment in these classes includes students with Special Education needs and those who qualify for Head Start services. The PreK program focuses on preparing students for kindergarten and encourages skill development and improvement based on the child's developmental level. In addition to the 4-year-old PreK program, some offerings are available to 3-year-olds with special education and/or speech development needs.~~

**Comment [JW16]:** Update by USD 470

In addition to those programs offered through USD 470, other preschool and daycare programs include Arkansas City Christian Academy, ~~First Baptist Preschool~~FBC Early Learning and Child Care Center, ~~Trinity Montessori Day School~~, ~~aa~~and Wood Child Care Center.

**Comment [JW17]:** Trinity no longer has a preschool per Kathy Swain.

### Private/Parochial Schools

For those wishing to educate their children in a non-public school setting, there are three schools in Arkansas City. Arkansas City Christian Academy serves kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grades at two locations. The pre-K and elementary students are located at Calvary Chapel, 1001 S. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. First Southern Baptist Church at 138 E Kansas Avenue. Seventh grade through 12th grade students are served at the First Baptist Church building at 220 E. Central Avenue. Two other private schools operate in Arkansas City -- Blessings Academy, 1529 W. Radio Lane. One Room Schoolhouse at 901 Circle Drive, and Sacred Heart Catholic School at 310 S B Street.

**Comment [JW18]:** Update provided by ACCA

**Comment [JW19]:** Blessings Academy is closed per Pastor Tim Smith

### Cowley College



Cowley College is a two-year community college and vocational/technical school located in the heart of Arkansas City, just west of downtown. There are more than 70 major and degree possibilities for the more than 6000 students attending Cowley, over fifty percent of whom are full-time students. There are several choices for how learning is delivered, including traditional classrooms in and near Arkansas City. But students may also choose online coursework, a hybrid of the two, or even an interactive distance learning combining students from different campus locations. Cowley College in Arkansas City is a residential campus with several dormitories available for students. In addition, many clubs and activities are provided for students including music and theater, athletics, student government and media. Cowley College offers multiple majors and career pathway possibilities to prepare students for transfer to a four-year program or to enter the workforce with a two-year job-ready degree. In addition, the College provides enrichment and training opportunities to our community patrons and industries.

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Cowley College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and coordinated by the Kansas Board of Regents.

Cowley offers over 120 different programs of study that guides a student on a pathway towards completing a degree or certificate.

Students can complete their first two years of coursework leading toward a bachelor's degree at a university in virtually any field of study. Cowley has articulation agreements with universities, online colleges, and technical schools in Kansas, Oklahoma, and beyond. Many associate degrees and certificates will give students the credentials and skills needed to immediately enter a specialized workforce.

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**Comment [JW20]:** Apparently this page break is not actually there in the final version but markup shows it still.



Begun in athe basement of Arkansas City High School in 1922 as Arkansas City Junior College, Cowley College is an important element of the community as well as an educational institution. Students are recruited to the school and often remain in the community. Various cultural and art opportunities, along with sporting competitions, enrich not only the students' experience, but that of other community members. Also, as a service to the community, Cowley College provides special programming and pricing for senior citizens at the campus. For the business community, it provides specialized business training or education, making the school an important partner to a wide variety of businesses in the region. Cowley encourages students to continue their education by articulation agreements with four-year institutions. There are courses offered by Friends University in Wichita for completion of bachelor's degrees, and with Southwestern College in Winfield for online Master's courses.

## 2.7 OTHER COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

The **Arkansas City Area Chamber of Commerce** is a place for local business persons to network, participate in individual and community marketing and promotion, and participate in a variety of programs. The Chamber provides a number of opportunities to further business relationships through ribbon cuttings, coffees, after hour events, and leadership development. It is important as well in facilitating communication among members.

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~~The local Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) is also important to the community and especially important to visitors to the community. The CVB is located at 106 S. Summit, sharing space with the Chamber. It provides help to organizations holding events in a variety of ways. VISIT Ark City works with and assists the City of Arkansas City, businesses, festivals and nonprofits with local events. VAC welcomes and plans for groups and gatherings that take place in our community such as conventions, family and class reunions and regional meetings. VAC is funded by transient guest tax.~~

Comment [JW21]: Update provided by Pam Crain

The **Arkansas City Senior Center** is a place where seniors receive services such as meals, recreation, education, ~~transportation~~, as well as social interaction. The Center provides vital services to seniors, their families, and the community. The Center is located at 320 S. A Street and meals are served on weekdays. The community is also fortunate to be home to the regional office of the **Area Agency on Aging and Disability Resource Center**, located at 304 S. Summit.

Comment [JW22]: Update provided by Kristin Sparks



The South Central **ADRC** provides a variety of services to those who are disabled or over 60 years of age.

The **Burford Center for the Arts**, located at 112 S. Summit, provides direction for the Burford Theater as well as other programming. The group has completed a campaign for \$~~43.23~~ million to fund many theater improvements including the lobby, HVAC systems, structural repairs, and fire suppression. ~~Fundraising is now underway for a \$2.5 million dollar campaign to restoration of~~ the auditorium, mezzanine, balcony and promenade. These successful efforts demonstrate the value the Center has for community members and businesses. Programming offered throughout the year includes classes for adults and youth in music, art, and theatre, along with after school programs with USD 470.

**Cherokee Strip Land Rush Museum** is an organization committed to preserving the history of the 1893 Land Rush and other local history. The **Cowley County Genealogy Library** is also located at the Museum, along with a variety of other indoor exhibits including hands-on rooms for activities, and a theater with stage seating for 150. Outdoor exhibits include Baird Living Farm and barn exhibits, along with a hummingbird and butterfly garden, and vegetable garden.

Recreation is an important contributor to community character, whether it is in athletic competition or health and fitness classes. **Arkansas City Recreation Commission** is funded primarily through mill levy funds, but also receives funds from sponsors, donors and registrations. A facility and program overview of the Commission is found at Chapter 5.

#### **Historic Preservation Organizations**

The **Arkansas City Historical Society** has been in existence since 1968. Its mission is to preserve the history from the community, through the stories told by early settlers. The original members of the society were able to interview the children of the founders of the community, and also collect historical materials. Eight books on the history of the community have been published with aid from the Society.

Arkansas City has been designated as a certified local government, and has a board that oversees the actions related to the buildings and historical district designated in Arkansas City. There is more on this in Chapter 5, detailing the historical features and assets of the community.

#### **Civic & Other Groups**

Civic groups also provide social opportunities for community members, with their activities, often local, but also extending to the region and around the world to aid humanitarian causes. Arkansas City is home to several civic clubs, including: Lions Clubs, Elks, Kiwanis, Optimist, Rotary and Soroptimist. Related to military service, there are the VFW and American Legion. Arkansas City also has other groups that seek to improve their members' lives through activities or targeted

learning, such as Toastmasters, Humane Society, Relay 4 Life and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Legacy Foundation is a non-profit foundation that assists other non-profits with fundraising. RISE Cowley is a coalition of people seeking to improve public health in Cowley County.

Angels in the Attic and Cowley House of Hope exist to serve the needs of Cowley County's low income and homeless or under-housed residents.

**Comment [JW23]:** Perhaps Angels in the Attic, Cowley House of Hope, Legacy Foundation and RISE Cowley should have some mention here or in other sections of this chapter as appropriate. Updated to add some of that information

## 2.8 RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Faith organizations influence and help define communities. Arkansas City has a wide variety of faith organizations that are working to improve the lives of those in and around the community. They provide programmingsupport and direction for their members and outreach in many ways to those less fortunate in the community. Some examples are: Manna Ministries, various meal ministries and Habitat for Humanity.

**Comment [JW24]:** Update provided by Pastor Jack Dickson of the Ministerial Alliance

There are over 40 houses of worship, representing allmost major denominations and faiths, and reflecting howthe importancet of the faith community~~is~~ to community members. The social and charitable opportunities also add dimension to people's lives in countless ways. Our ability to care for one another reminds us that we live in a place where we are cared for.

-A visual demonstration of the importance of faith for the community is Scripture Hill. The message "Christ Died for the Ungodly" is north of Arkansas City and west of the Santa FeBNSF railroad tracks. The whitewashed letters are 18 feet high and 12 feet wide. For over 150 years, faith in One who is greater than us has guided and inspired the greatness of our community. That same faith will lead us farther still.

~~There are a great many ways to interact as a community, whether through school activities, ballgames, cultural offerings, volunteer activities, or faith institutions. These are the building blocks of any community and Arkansas City has a broad array of institutions and organizations that improve the lives of citizens and the future of the community on a daily basis.~~

**Comment [JW25]:** This does not belong in the 2.8, perhaps it was intended to be 2.9? Seems unnecessary.