

# Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan

Grain Valley, Missouri

August 2014



Grain Valley,  
Missouri  
*Come Home To Opportunity*

# Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan

Prepared for:

City of Grain Valley, Missouri

By

## **DESIGNWORKSHOP**

Design Workshop, Inc. – Urban Planning, Economic and Market Analysis, Public Facilitation

Confluence – Urban Planning, Public Facilitation

Burns and McDonnell – Transportation and Civil Engineering

Stinson Leonard Street LLP – Real Estate and Municipal Legal Advisor

For more information, contact:

City of Grain Valley

711 Main Street

Grain Valley, MO

## Acknowledgements

### ***Board of Aldermen***

Mike Todd, Mayor

Scott Shafer, Alderman Ward 1

Dale Arnold, Alderman Ward 1

Chuck Johnston, Alderman Ward 2

Yolanda West, Alderman Ward 2

Bob Headley, Alderman Ward 3

Mike Scully, Alderman Ward 3

### ***Planning and Zoning Commission***

Kevin Browning

Debbie Saffell

Nilesh Patel

Haydn Ambrose

Bob Dimmitt

Mike Reneau

Kerry Boardman

James Pycior

### ***City Staff***

Alexa Barton, City Administrator

Ryan Hunt, Assistant City Administrator & Director of  
Community Development

Ken Murphy, City Planner

Shannon Davies, Director of Parks and Recreation

John Paa, GIS Specialist

Rick Arroyo, City Engineer

### ***Steering Committee***

The City of Grain Valley would like to thank the members of the Steering Committee for the Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan for their input, assistance, and time contributed throughout the Comprehensive Plan process.

Bob Dimmitt, Planning and Zoning Commission

David Flick, Terra Technologies

Greg Martinette, Economic Development Consultant  
to City of Grain Valley

Dr. Roy Moss, Superintendent, Grain Valley Public  
Schools

Zachary Pross, Executive Director, Grain Valley  
Chamber of Commerce

Scott Shafer, Alderman Ward 1

David Ward, Ward Development

Yolanda West, Alderman Ward 2

Lorri Wilbee-Kobe, Attorney at Law

Kim Roam, Attorney at Law

<b>INTRODUCTION.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES.</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>LAND USE PLAN</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>PARKS AND OPEN SPACE</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>COMMUNITY CHARACTER.</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION.</b>	<b>131</b>
<b>APPENDIX.</b>	<b>147</b>



INTRODUCTION



The City of Grain Valley has experienced significant growth and change over the last twenty years, as it has emerged as one of the fastest growing suburban communities in Jackson County and the Kansas City metropolitan area. In 2014, as the economy continues to recover from the “Great Recession” and economic activity has increased, the City of Grain Valley is beginning to grow again. In response to the changes of the last ten to twenty years and the anticipation of increased growth to come, the Board of Aldermen authorized the City staff in Fall 2013 to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan for the community, to guide Grain Valley over the next twenty years. While an “update” to the Comprehensive Plan was completed as recently as 2010, city leaders chose to revise the plan to reflect current conditions, the changing desires of the community, and to include new policies and strategies.

## What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A Comprehensive Plan serves as the guide for future growth and development of a community. It outlines the vision of the community for future land use, parks and open space, transportation, and utilities. A good comprehensive plan also provides guidance to city leaders concerning various other issues, including the protection of environmentally sensitive lands, the protection of farmland, overall economic development strategies and policies, historic preservation, and a variety of other topics.

Above all, the Comprehensive Plan outlines the Vision of the Grain Valley community for how the area will evolve and change over the next twenty years. This document includes text, maps, pictures, and graphical illustrations in order to capture the process of gaining input from the public and various stakeholders in the Grain Valley community concerning the future of the community. The overall goal of the plan is to outline a “roadmap” that will maintain Grain Valley as a healthy, functional, and desirable place to live.

Throughout the process, participants (including residents, property owners, business owners, and other stakeholders and members of the public) were asked a variety of questions by city staff and the project team, including the following key questions:

- What is the overall vision of Grain Valley in the future? What is the community missing to achieve its vision for the future?
- What is the community missing (in terms of transportation, utilities, and other factors) to ensure that it will continue to grow?
- What is the relationship of Grain Valley to its neighbors (including nearby cities)? In which direction should or could the community grow in the future?
- How can Grain Valley work to create a better sense of community, and better connect the north and south sides of town?
- What policies and strategies should the City use to make sure Grain Valley grows as a high quality community over the next two decades?

The Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan guides and influences the following types of decisions:

- It provides a general framework for evaluating land development applications submitted to the City on an ongoing basis.
- It serves as the basis for the City’s zoning and subdivision regulations and zoning map.

- It establishes the priorities for more detailed plans which Grain Valley may formulate for specific areas in the city and for specific topics (such as open space, trails, and roads).
- It assists with the prioritizing of funding for public improvement projects, such as roads, sewers, and water mains.
- The document includes more detailed Concept Plans for four “focus areas” in Grain Valley that provide ideas for the future development of these areas in the community
  - Around I-70 and Lefholz,
  - Around Buckner Tarsney and Duncan Road,
  - Around Buckner Tarsney and Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, and
  - The area between I-70 and the Kansas City Southern (“KCS”) railroad tracks, and along and east of Main Street between I-70 and Downtown Grain Valley

The following subsections contain information intended to aid in understanding and using the Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan.

## Who is affected by this Comprehensive Plan?

In Missouri, comprehensive plans are advisory only – meaning that the maps, goals, policies and text included in this document do not constitute regulations. This document does not dictate the course of action of the Board of Aldermen, the Planning Commission, or the City staff, regardless of the subject matter. Nonetheless, this plan document reflects the vision and goals of the people of Grain Valley. The degree to which the plan is followed will in large part determine the degree to which the stated vision and goals will be met.

Relevant portions of this plan should be used to guide decisions regarding land use, the environment, the economy, transportation, housing, or any other topic of potential impact to the quality of life enjoyed by the people of Grain Valley. Every landowner, developer, city department, and appointed and/or elected official should recognize the significance of this plan and the implementation tools it contains to the future of Grain Valley. General conformance to the policies outlined in this plan should be required.

## How do I find out about requirements affecting my land?

The Preferred Land Use Vision provides helpful information concerning the vision of the Grain Valley community for how various land uses would ideally develop in and near the City of Grain Valley over the next two decades, and provides guidance on how lands may develop going forward. The various goals and policies articulated in this document may also affect particular landowners in the City. The City suggests that landowners in the City of Grain Valley consult the city’s Development Code for specific standards that apply to all properties. City staff is available to answer questions that may arise from the Development Code and this Comprehensive Plan document.

The Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan and the Grain Valley Development Code are available for viewing at the Community Development office at City Hall, 711 Main Street, Grain Valley, MO 64029 (Phone: 816-847-6200 or Fax 816-847-6206), or on the City’s website: [www.grainvalley.com](http://www.grainvalley.com).

## Need more help?

Contact a City planner or other member of the City staff if you:

- Have a general inquiry about this plan
- Are unsure what policies apply to your land
- Would like to know how this plan may be changed

The American Planning Association website ([www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)) is a helpful resource for general planning information.

## Planning in the United States and the State of Missouri

### *Planning in the United States*

The following text is excerpted from *The Practice of Local Government Planning* (1998), edited by Frank S. So and Judith Getzels.

The European settlers brought their concept of town planning, which was based on the European idea of the powers of municipal government, to America. The American Revolution and the subsequent adoption of the Constitution pushed local authority to state governments, with counties acting as agents of the states. Cities and towns operated under limited powers, focusing mostly on the maintenance of order and the provision of basic services. Authority to control the development of private property was unclear, as states and counties generally did not act in this capacity.

The American population exploded in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1907, the first planning board, the Hartford Commission on a City Plan, was created by the Connecticut legislature. Other planning boards soon followed, most created to sponsor the development of a plan, to oversee its execution, and to encourage financial support of public construction projects. In 1909, Wisconsin passed the first state enabling act granting municipalities the right to engage in city planning.

In 1915, land use zoning came to the U.S. Supreme Court in *Hadacheck v. Sebastian*, and many interpreted the findings of the case to have granted implicit approval of land use zoning. The role of City government in planning became more evident. Comprehensive plans were developed, and became the controlling document guiding growth based on a set of comprehensive, long-term community goals. In *Village of Euclid v. Amber Realty Co.* (1926), the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of comprehensive zoning.

Physical planning gave way to planning for social programs in the 1960s. In 1965, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development was created and programs for rent supplements, low-interest loans, and subsidies were created. The 1970s saw a shift to growth management and environmental planning, and as the 1980s approached, historic preservation became a major focus for planners. For the last several decades, comprehensive plans have become the centerpiece in many jurisdictions to help direct physical, operational, and capital planning endeavors.

## Planning in the State of Missouri

Note: The following information is intended to provide a general overview of legislative enabling authority for land use planning in Missouri. Before utilizing any of the land use powers cited here, the relevant statutes and case law should be carefully reviewed. The following does not constitute a complete review of all Missouri land use law, and is not to be construed as legal advice.

Missouri statutes outline the legal basis for developing and maintaining a Comprehensive Plan to guide the growth of a community. Municipalities in Missouri are considered to be governmental subdivisions of the State and, as such, are empowered to adopt planning and zoning for the general purposes of enhancing the health, safety, and welfare of their residents. The basic authority for planning and zoning is contained in Chapter 89 of the Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri.

As outlined in sections 89.340 and 89.360 of the Missouri Revised Statutes, the planning commission of a given municipality “shall make and adopt a city plan for the physical development of the municipality”. The “city plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts and descriptive and explanatory manner, shall show the (planning) commission’s recommendations for the physical development and uses of land”<sup>1</sup>. In preparation of the city plan, the planning commission “shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and probably future growth of the municipality. The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated development of the municipality which will, in accordance with existing and future needs, best promote the general welfare, as well as efficiency and economy in the process of development”.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Section 89.340, *RsMo.*

<sup>2</sup> Section 89.360. *RsMo.*



2

COMMUNITY PLANNING  
PROCESS



The importance of the Grain Valley comprehensive plan update to the future of Grain Valley required a comprehensive, transparent, and well-conceived public outreach effort. The consultant team worked throughout the planning process to reach a broad range of participants and create a consensus for the recommended comprehensive plan that will help Grain Valley move into the future. During the project, members of the consultant team and the City of Grain Valley met with community leaders, property and business owners, and the general public to review, discuss and advance the recommended comprehensive plan update.

## Steering Committee and Stakeholder Meetings

In order to engage businesses, elected leaders, and other civic leaders in the Grain Valley area, the consultant team worked with staff from the City of Grain Valley to form a Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is a leadership group comprised of key stakeholders who serve as champions for the comprehensive plan and serve to represent interest groups and associated constituents in the planning process. At regular meetings throughout the comprehensive plan update process, this committee helped guide the project and advise the team on the interests of property owners, businesses, the local school district, various neighborhoods and parts of town, and the general population in Grain Valley. City staff, along with the consultant team, used input from the Steering Committee throughout the process to help define the project's critical success factors, identify planning needs, and address key issues facing the City of Grain Valley overall, as well as particular neighborhoods and focus areas, over the next few decades.

In addition, the Steering Committee served as an agent to introduce project stakeholders to the planning team and facilitate relationships among those interested parties in order to provide as much community feedback as possible. During its various trips to Grain Valley, members of the consultant team met with business owners and property owners from various areas in Grain Valley, and from the different unincorporated areas surrounding the city, in order to review land use plans, transportation and open space plans, and implementation ideas that may affect various groups of property owners and other stakeholders.

The consultant team also periodically met with various departments within the City of Grain Valley (such as Parks, Public Works, and Planning) to discuss policy and technical issues related to planning and implementation. Discussions with these departments helped the planning team and the City sort out policy issues and resolve technical concerns before moving forward with recommendations included in the updated Comprehensive Plan document.

## Online Input: Project Website and Mindmixer

### *Project Website*

The City worked with the consultant team to establish a project website, [www.imaginegrainvalley.com](http://www.imaginegrainvalley.com), in order to publicize the planning effort including key meetings and milestones, provide background information and various alternative and final planning concepts to the public, and to solicit general input from the public (through a comments section of the website). The project website contained online versions of the Community Survey conducted at the outset of the project as well as online versions of “keypad polling” surveys that were conducted during each of the three public open house sessions for the Comprehensive Plan process.

### *Mindmixer*

Mindmixer is an online community engagement tool that allows the public to offer opinions, suggestions, and comments on specific topics related to a planning project. The consultant team created an Imagine Grain Valley Mindmixer website to gain additional public feedback and ensure that the Grain Valley planning process remained transparent and collaborative. The City and the consultant team encouraged members of the community, through flyers, announcements, and through contacts with friends and colleagues in the area, to participate in the Mindmixer website and share their ideas as the project progressed. The planning team posted the following “topics” for discussion as the project progressed:

- Our Community’s Strengths
- Visioning Our Community’s Future
- City Boundaries
- Living In Our Community
- Our Community In One Word
- Floodplain Management
- Trails and Bike Paths

The consultant team, City staff, and the Steering Committee reviewed the comments posted to Mindmixer on a regular basis and used this input to create preliminary and final concepts included in the Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan, as well as ideas for the plan’s implementation.



Screenshot of Imagine Grain Valley website  
 Source: Design Workshop, Inc.



Screenshot of Grain Valley Mindmixer website  
 Source: Design Workshop, Inc.

## Community Survey – Fall 2013

The City and the consultant team conducted an overall Community Survey at the beginning of the comprehensive planning process, in Fall 2013, to gain input from the community regarding their vision for Grain Valley in the future, and key areas in need of improvement in terms of housing, economic development, parks, and various public services. This feedback helped the consultant team gain a better understanding of the existing conditions in Grain Valley and helped the team in formulating alternative concepts for review, as well as implementation ideas to be included in the overall Comprehensive Plan update.

A total of 600 citizens completed the Community Survey in an online format during Fall 2013. In addition, during December 2013 members of the consultant team conducted “retail level” outreach to publicize the Community Survey, in which team members met with citizens at the Casey’s General Store and Patricia’s grocery store in Grain Valley to let passersby know of the community survey, as well as upcoming public open houses for the comprehensive planning effort.

## Public Open Houses

The planning team held three public open houses throughout the comprehensive plan update process to gather input, share ideas, address concerns and present options to Grain Valley residents and others interested in the project.

### ***Initial Public Open House, Thursday, January 9, 2014: Grain Valley Community Center***

At an initial public open house, the consultant team led participants through an introduction to the Comprehensive Planning process for Grain Valley, revealed takeaways from the team’s analysis of existing conditions in the community, and gained input concerning the vision for Grain Valley in the future. The City advertised the open house through flyers distributed around town, flyers mailed out in monthly water bills in the city, and notices on message boards in the vicinity of City Hall. Members of the Steering Committee publicized the meeting, as well, through their channels of communications and contact and through door to door contact with property owners, business owners, and customers in the community. A total of 36 residents and interested citizens attended the initial public open house.



*Keypad Polling Session, January 9, 2014*  
*Source: City of Grain Valley*

At the open house, the consultant team made an initial presentation to the audience and then completed a keypad polling exercise with participants that gathered real time information about how the public currently views Grain Valley, and how they would like the City to plan to grow in the future. Following the keypad polling session, the planning team divided the attendees into “breakout groups” and led discussions regarding the following questions:

- What is your vision for the future of Grain Valley?
- How do you want growth to happen?
- What are the most important community facilities/amenities?



*Breakout Session Photos, January 9, 2014*  
*Source: City of Grain Valley*

In addition to the planning team’s engagement with public meeting attendees during the break-out sessions, public comment sheets allowed participants to make open-ended comments, in written form, for review by the consultant team and City staff. These sheets allowed meeting participants to voice additional or specific opinions about their wants and needs, and allowed the public to give feedback on the presentation.

**Key Takeaways from the Initial Public Open House:**

- Residents want to see Grain Valley maintain its small-town feel, while also embracing growth that will help sustain the community into the future.
- Creating more jobs in Grain Valley is essential.
- Residents would like to see a centralized downtown area, that can serve as a community gathering space and that can also boost the economy, move forward over the next few decades.
- Ideas to grow the City include expanding the City's boundaries, improving infrastructure to attract businesses and creating destination attractions that will attract people from outside the community to visit.
- The current community center is well-liked and well-used, but could be expanded to serve future capacity.
- The community is interested in preserving, protecting and improving parks and open space.
- There is a lot of interest in having a commuter rail stop in Grain Valley, connecting the community to Downtown Kansas City.

**Second Public Open House, February 27, 2014: Sni-A-Bar Elementary School**

The City and the consultant team conducted a second public open house at the end of February 2014 in order to gain input from participants concerning three alternative concepts for the future land uses in Grain Valley and the surrounding area, as well as input concerning concepts for future transportation and parks and open space planning in the Grain Valley area over the next few decades.

In order to increase turnout at the second public open house, the City advertised through flyers that every household attending the open house would receive a \$20 credit on their monthly water bill. In addition, the City offered free pizza to all attendees as well as free child care and activities for children attending the open house session. A total of 320 adults and 40 children attended the open house (still need to verify this number or just go with an estimate).



Second Public Open House, Sni-A-Bar Elementary School Gymnasium,  
February 27, 2014  
Source: Confluence



*Local Elementary School Students at the Second Public Open House, Sni-A-Bar Elementary School, February 27, 2014  
Source: City of Grain Valley*

Following an opening presentation by the consultant team, attendees participated in another keypad polling session in order to provide feedback, in real time, concerning their preferences for the various land use, transportation, and parks and open space concepts presented at the meeting.

***Key Takeaways from the Second Public Open House:***

- Participants favored Land Use Alternative 3 (see the Land Use section of this document for more information)
- Participants were generally supportive of eventually expanding Grain Valley's borders in order to accommodate future growth and to preserve areas around Grain Valley for future expansion.
- Most attendees agreed that floodplain areas (such as the areas near Sni-A-Bar Creek) should be protected as open space, and that the city should require new developments to include various types of parks and open space.
- Attendees favored completing a comprehensive system of trails and greenways to connect parks, neighborhoods, and different parts of the community together.
- Most participants thought a new business park to serve Grain Valley would best be located on Buckner Tarsney Road, north of I-70, or near a potential future interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, east of town.

***Third Public Open House, April 3, 2014: Grain Valley High School***

The City and the consultant team conducted a third and final public open house for the Comprehensive Plan in early April, 2014 in order to gain final input from participants concerning the preferred plans for future land use, transportation, and parks and open space for Grain Valley and the surrounding areas. The meeting also reviewed and gained input from attendees concerning conceptual plans for four focus areas in the community: 1) the area around I-70 and Lefholz Road, 2) the area around Buckner Tarsney Road and Duncan Road, 3) the area around Buckner Tarsney Road and Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, and 4) an area north of Downtown Grain Valley, from I-70 south to the Kansas City Southern railroad tracks, and from Main Street east to Seymour.

In order to maintain strong turnout for the final public meeting, the City offered free hot dogs and other food for attendees and also offered a series of raffle prizes for attendees, provided courtesy of various businesses in Grain Valley. A total of around 75 people attended the final public open house.

After an initial presentation that reviewed the preferred plans for land use, transportation, and parks / open space as well as the concept plans for the four focus areas, the consultant team led participants through a final “keypad polling” session that gained input concerning a variety of questions tied to the various plans presented at the meeting, as well as questions related to how the City should move forward in implementing the new Comprehensive Plan. The project website provided an online version of the keypad questions for a month following the final public open house, to gain input from individuals who had not attended the public meeting.



*Third Public Open House, Grain Valley High School, April 3, 2014*  
Source: City of Grain Valley

**Key Takeaways from the Third Public Open House (and Online Input)**

- A majority of respondents to the survey (provided at the public open house, and in an online version) favored the preferred plans for Land Use, Transportation, and Parks / Open Space for the Grain Valley area.
- A majority of respondents to the survey (provided at the public open house, and in an online version) generally favored the concept plans presented for the four focus areas in the Grain Valley area.
- Respondents favored including a variety of civic uses on the City-owned properties that surround the Sni-A-Bar farm property, near Sni-A-Bar Boulevard and Buckner Tarsney Road.
- From a menu of potential “action items”, respondents in particular favored the City moving forward to annex properties to the east, toward Oak Grove, and to the west, toward Blue Springs.
- From a separate menu of goals for the City, respondents in particular favored Grain Valley moving forward to expand infrastructure facilities to the east, to serve the area around I-70 and Lefholz Road, as well as the completion of a bike and trail network throughout the community.

*Evaluation of the Community Engagement Process*

The consultant team surveyed attendees at the final public open house in April, 2014, and in an online version of the questions posed at the open house, concerning their level of satisfaction with the community engagement process employed to develop the new Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan.

- 67% of respondents at the Final Public Open House indicated that process met or exceeded their expectations
- 56% of respondents to the online survey indicated that the process met or exceeded their expectations.



# 3

## TRANSPORTATION



The purpose of the Transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan is to outline a workable set of goals, policies, and actions that can be used to guide the future development of Grain Valley's transportation system. A direct relationship exists between a transportation system and the various types of land uses in a community. The amount of land in a City used for accommodating transportation uses typically comprises around twenty-five percent of a City's overall land area. Transportation systems provide the means to travel between various land uses, neighborhoods, and districts in a community. The locations and types of land uses in a community have a direct impact on the types of transportation facilities needed, and in turn the combination of different land uses and the traffic generated as a result of these land uses has a direct relationship to the overall performance of a transportation system.

A well designed and implemented transportation system can also help promote and support economic development in a community. Improving the transportation system can reduce travel times between different land uses, thereby providing enhanced accessibility to destinations in the local area. A strong transportation system can provide:

- Better access to employment centers, for City residents and commuters
- Better access to customers, for retail developments
- Decreased transportation costs incurred by manufacturers and other businesses

A well-planned transportation system, however, should balance the needs to move people around a community with the desire to create transportation systems that are consistent with the scale and desired character of a community. The transportation system should also balance the benefits of providing local access (to residences, businesses, and other destinations) with the desire to provide connectivity from Grain Valley to the larger region.

The first step in this process is identifying the existing conditions of the transportation system – including roads, as well as facilities for bicyclists and people walking – in the community. The baseline or “existing condition” describes the current state of the Grain Valley transportation system, identifies the policies and decisions already made concerning the future transportation system by city officials, as well as officials from Jackson County, the Mid-America Regional Council (“MARC”) and the Missouri Department of Transportation (“MoDOT”).

# Existing Conditions

## Roadway Network

### *Expressways / Freeways*

An expressway or freeway provides for rapid and efficient movement of large volumes of through traffic between different regions and across a particular urban area. These facilities typically have multiple lanes and have a median or another kind of divider to provide for enhanced safety. Expressways and freeways provide only “limited access”, typically every mile to two miles, to local streets and nearby properties. Interstate 70 passes through the middle of Grain Valley, running east-west, and connects the Kansas City metropolitan area to Columbia, Missouri, to the east, and the St. Louis region, in eastern Missouri. The only interchange on I-70 currently serving Grain Valley is the exit at Main Street / Buckner Tarsney Road. MoDOT recently completed a major reconstruction of this interchange facility to provide for two lanes in each direction on Buckner Tarsney as it passes by I-70. The project also provided north-south sidewalk improvements through the interchange area, along Buckner Tarsney, and realigned US 40 Highway and its connection to Buckner Tarsney in the vicinity, in order to reduce congestion at the I-70 interchange.



*View Looking North to New I-70 Interchange at Main Street / Buckner Tarsney Road*  
*Source: Design Workshop*

## Arterials

Primary arterials move larger volumes of traffic between major traffic generators and land use concentrations across a community. They also serve as connections to other urbanized areas. Providing direct access to abutting properties is a secondary function of a primary arterial.

Secondary arterials typically serve as connections between local / collector streets and primary arterials and move larger volumes of traffic over shorter distances within a community. As with primary arterials, the provision of direct access to abutting properties is a secondary function. Secondary arterial roadways are predominantly used to move traffic within the corridors of the City of Grain Valley and connect with collector roadways.

The arterials within Grain Valley as of 2014 are:

US 40 Highway – This state highway connects from around I-70 and Main Street, westward into Blue Springs, Independence, and parts of Kansas City, Missouri.

Buckner Tarsney Road (also named Main Street in the heart of Grain Valley) – This state highway is the main north-south arterial, connecting the north and south sides of Grain Valley. It connects from Grain Valley to US 24 and the community of Buckner, several miles to the north, and to a junction with US 50 Highway near the community of Lone Jack, in southeastern Jackson County. MoDOT is currently in the process of upgrading Main Street from 40 Highway south to SW Eagles Parkway, including replacing pavement, constructing new curbs, and providing improved sidewalks and bicycle accommodations.

SW Eagles Parkway – This two lane state highway (Route AA) connects from Main Street, westward into parts of Blue Springs. Volumes on this roadway have increased over the last ten years, due to commercial development at the southwest corner of Main Street and SW Eagles Parkway and residential development along and near SW Eagles Parkway.



*View of SW Eagles Parkway, Looking East Toward Main Street  
Source: Design Workshop*

Duncan Road – The main east-west arterial servicing the northern half of Grain Valley. It connects from Buckner Tarsney Road to the northern portions of Blue Springs, to the west, and provides access to the Rosewood and Woodbury subdivisions.

*Collector Streets*

Collector streets provide for the transition between the higher speeds and traffic volumes of arterials and the lower speeds and traffic volumes of local streets. Collectors typically connect residential areas, small retail centers, parks, churches, etc. with arterial streets, and move traffic over shorter distances than even a secondary arterial. The following are some of the collector streets within Grain Valley:

- Ryan Road
- Minter Road
- Barr Road
- Tyer Road
- Rust Road
- RD Mize Road
- NW Jefferson Street
- NE McQuerry Road
- Seymour Road
- James D. Rollo Drive
- Dillingham Road
- E.E. Kirby Road
- Sni-A-Bar Boulevard

*Local Streets*

Local streets include all remaining roads within Grain Valley. These streets provide access to abutting property and distribute traffic to collectors and arterial streets. They are also important in forming the character of individual neighborhoods around the community.

*Projected Traffic Growth*

As Grain Valley continues to grow, traffic volumes on the main roadways serving the community will continue to escalate over the next few decades. The following table outlines average daily traffic (“ADT”) counts (as of 2010) for key routes in the city, along with projections for ADTO for 2020 and 2030.

**Table 1: Average Daily Traffic**

LOCATION	CURRENT (2010)	2020	2030
Interstate 70	62,00	78,000	90,000
40 Highway	5,500	21,000	26,100
Main Street	6,000	24,000	35,000
SW Eagles Parkway	8,085	15,500	20,800

Source: City of Grain Valley

## Public Transportation

The City of Grain Valley does not have access to any public transportation as of 2014. The Kansas City Area Transit Authority (“KCATA”) operates bus services (referred to as “The Metro”) that connect Kansas City, Missouri with outlying communities in Jackson County. The closest fixed route bus lines to Grain Valley connect the downtown area of Independence, around 10 miles to the northwest of Grain Valley, to Downtown and adjoining areas of Kansas City. Grain Valley and points to the east in Jackson County do not have direct access to KCATA fixed-route bus lines.

The KCATA operates a “Share-A-Fare” van system that provides door-to-door services for elderly and disabled residents located within three-quarters of a mile of a Metro fixed-route bus line in Kansas City, Missouri. The service is primarily designated for work or medical trips but may also be used for education, shopping, social, or personal trips. Share-A-Fare’s ADA Service (sometimes called Paratransit Service) provides specialized transportation for people with disabilities who are not able to fully utilize the Metro’s fixed-route public transportation system. The service was designed to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”). While KCATA operates Share-A-Fare in Independence, Lee’s Summit, and Blue Springs in the suburban portion of eastern Jackson County, the agency to date has not extended Share-A-Fare service to the Grain Valley area.

### ***Key Issues, Existing Transportation System:***

- The city does not control or maintain the following MoDOT routes: 40 Highway, Main Street / Buckner Tarsney, or SW Eagles Parkway. Any improvements to these routes would require coordination with MoDOT.
- The existing transportation system is constrained by the presence of the Kansas City Southern Railroad running east-west through the community, and the lack of any grade-separated crossings of the railroad. The railroad follows an east-west alignment through Grain Valley, between the 40 Highway and SW Eagles Parkway corridors, and crosses Main Street just south of Front Street. The railroad proceeds to the east toward Oak Grove, to the south of I-70 and north of Old Highway 40. When a train is traveling through town, it is impossible to make most north-south transportation connections until the train has passed.
- Main Street / Buckner Tarsney Road is the only north-south road alignment that passes through the entire community. As the community continues to grow, this main arterial will experience increased congestion. Grain Valley lacks an alternative north-south alignment to serve future growth to the west, and the east, in the community.
- The City currently does not have any transit service available for residents and is not connected to regional bus systems or services connected to other communities in Jackson County. Citizens who are unable to drive, such as disabled persons and a portion of the elderly population in Grain Valley, currently do not have any options for public transit in order to shop, commute to work, or conduct their daily business.

## Previous Studies and Regional Initiatives

### *Transportation Outlook 2040: Metropolitan Kansas City's Long-Range Transportation Plan*

The Mid-America Regional Council adopted a long-range transportation plan for the Kansas City region in 2008 that lays out broad goals and identifies the role the transportation system should play in achieving the regional vision for the Kansas City area in 2040. The MARC plan calls for a safe, balanced, regional multi-modal transportation system that is coordinated with land use planning, supports equal access to opportunities, and protects the region's environment. MARC regularly selects transportation projects from around the Kansas City area for funding, and uses the 2040 plan as the basis for many of its funding decisions.

Specifically, the following key goals guide MARC decision-making, which impacts Grain Valley and all communities in the Kansas City area.

- Accessibility
- Climate Change and Energy Use (with the goal of reducing the use of fossil fuels)
- Economic Vitality
- Environment (protecting and restoring the region's natural resources)
- Place Making
- Public Health
- Safety & Security
- System Condition (ensuring the transportation system is maintained in good condition)
- System Performance (managing the system to achieve reliable and efficient performance)

In contrast to transportation plans of the past, the Transportation Outlook 2040 plan focused on promoting a series of revitalized transportation corridors linking vibrant activity centers throughout the metropolitan area. The plan also assumed that the region would begin to promote a greater degree of infill development and balance the level of growth at the edge of the metropolitan area.

While MARC's Transportation Outlook 2040 plan does not directly impact specific transportation improvements in Grain Valley, the document does identify 40 Highway as one of the key corridors in the region that would benefit from planning for multi-modal transportation and the creation of vibrant activity centers at key locations. In addition, the emphasis of the plan on placemaking and quality of life will continue to influence transportation funding throughout the region over the next few decades.

### *Smart Moves and Commuter Rail:*

Smart Moves is a regional planning effort coordinated by MARC that was conducted over the last several years to articulate a vision for regional transit needs, priorities, and projects in the Kansas City region through 2030. The overall Smart Moves process identified a corridor from Kansas City to Grain Valley as the location for a "fixed route guideway" to connect eastern Jackson County to the heart of Kansas City. As part of the Smart Moves effort, communities in Jackson County have conducted planning over the last several years to implement a commuter rail line from Odessa to a terminus near the City Market in Downtown Kansas City. This route would follow the Kansas City Southern railroad alignment

through eastern Jackson County and would pass through both Grain Valley and Blue Springs. Previous studies indicated that the average commute time along I-70 from Grain Valley to Downtown Kansas City would increase from 39 minutes in 2012 to over one hour by 2030, and that the interstate already experiences significant levels of congestion during rush hours in each direction. Previous planning and diagrams for the commuter rail alignment included only one stop in Grain Valley – either around the rail crossing for Kirby Drive, near the airport, or near Main Street, in the vicinity of the downtown area for Grain Valley. As of early 2014 the county was continuing to encounter difficulties in negotiating with Kansas City Southern for access to the right of way along the rail line to run the commuter rail system. However, if or when the commuter rail line moves forward, Grain Valley would gain a significant access to public transit that would enhance connectivity to the heart of the Kansas City metro area, make the area more attractive to commuters, and also perhaps bring additional visitors to Grain Valley from the rest of the Kansas City region.

#### *40 Highway Vision Plan*

MARC coordinated a planning effort in 2012 and 2013 to outline a vision and action plan for the 40 Highway corridor, from Grain Valley to Kansas City. The study included the following key takeaways for the Grain Valley area.

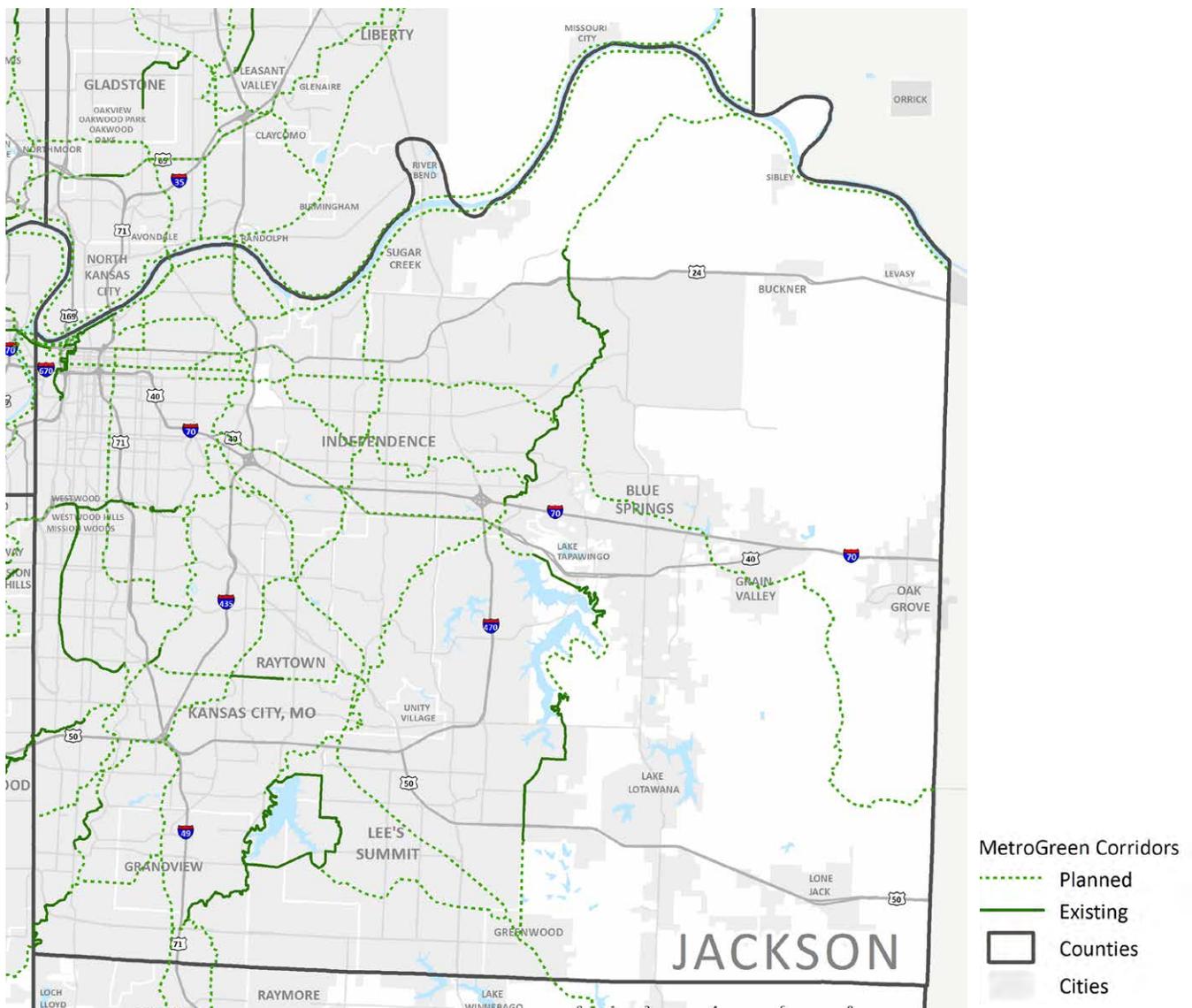
- The 40 Highway plan articulated the potential to develop a Bus Rapid Transit (“BRT”) line along 40 Highway between Grain Valley and Kansas City. A BRT line would serve as an express bus for commuters traveling from eastern Jackson County to Kansas City. Enhanced transit service (such as a BRT) along 40 Highway could provide a viable alternative for commuters traveling along I-70 from the Grain Valley area. Furthermore, Grain Valley and its neighbors to the west (Independence, Blue Springs, and Kansas City, Missouri) may elect to focus future planning for a primary transit connection to Kansas City on the 40 Highway corridor if efforts to introduce a commuter rail line along the Kansas City Southern railway route do not succeed. The 40 Highway plan did not include detailed design of a BRT route along the corridor. However, the concept of a BRT connection along 40 Highway did gain support from the communities along 40 Highway during this visioning process.
- Over time, Blue Springs and Grain Valley could work with MoDOT to expand the existing 40 Highway route (between 7 Highway in Blue Springs and Main Street in Grain Valley) from its existing condition (as a two lane highway with a speed limit of either 45 or 55 miles per hour) to a four lane “parkway”, including a landscaped median, multi-use paths on either side of the parkway, designed for people walking and biking, and the installation of street trees, enhanced lighting, improved signage, and other elements commonly associated with parkways around the country. The parkway design of 40 Highway would help create a more attractive gateway from Blue Springs into the Grain Valley area and create an improved “front door” into the community from the west.



*Perspective Image from 40 Highway Corridor and Focus Area Plan, 2013  
Source: Mid-America Regional Council*

## Mid America Regional Council's MetroGreen System

The Mid-America Regional Council ("MARC"), the regional organization of local governments in the Kansas City region, has outlined a system of several hundred miles of future bike and trail connections throughout the metropolitan area and beyond, known as the MetroGreen system. Parts of the MetroGreen system, such as multi-purpose trails along Mill Creek in Johnson County, currently exist. The MetroGreen plan calls for a multi-purpose trail to follow Sni-A-Bar Creek northward from southeastern Jackson County to the RD Mize Road area. From there, the MetroGreen trail would turn left and proceed along the creek alignment just to the south of SW Eagles Parkway in Grain Valley before proceeding farther to the north and west, into Blue Springs. This route would connect with the Little Blue River area, just to the north and west of Blue Springs. From there, riders could connect with trails that proceed west toward Kansas City or south to Lee's Summit and the Longview Lake area.



Map of Future MetroGreen Corridors in Jackson County  
Source: Mid America Regional Council

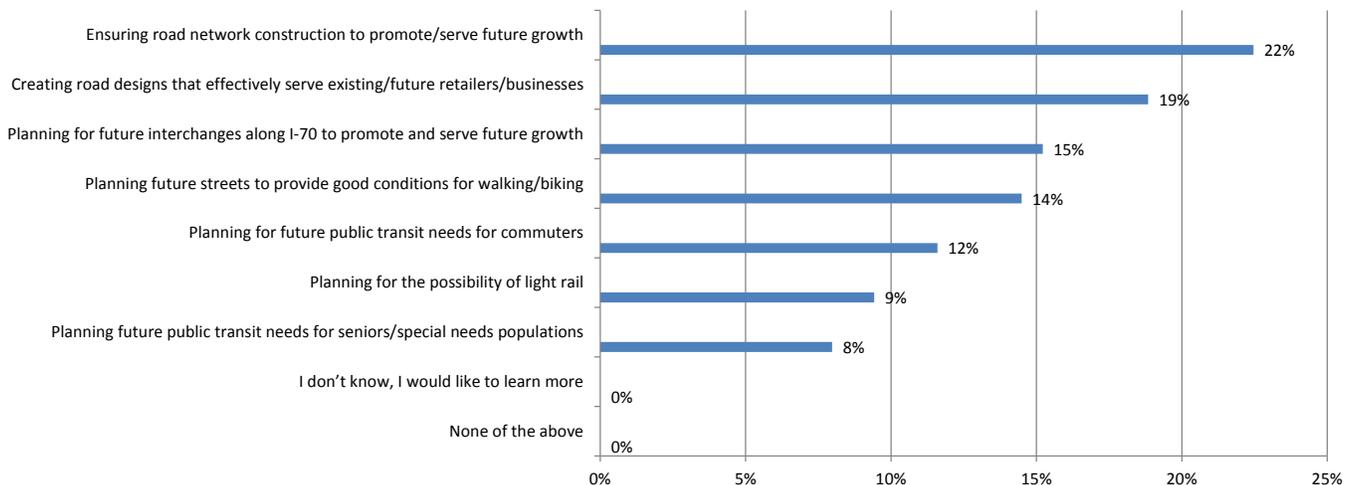
While automobile travel will continue to represent the dominant mode of travel in Jackson County over the next twenty years, a growing number of Americans are now commuting by bicycle in order to save money on transportation costs and to live a healthier lifestyle. The MetroGreen route connecting through Grain Valley could serve a portion of the population that chooses to commute by bicycle. Furthermore, this route, as well as other trails that exist or are planned within the City of Grain Valley (see the Parks section of this document) provide opportunities for recreational transportation for residents and visitors alike.

## Takeaways from Public Input

Members of the Grain Valley community provided input during the three rounds of public open houses concerning some of the key issues facing the city from a transportation perspective. The following outlines some of the key findings.

- During the first public open house and in a follow-up online survey, respondents indicated that “traffic congestion” and “insufficient road infrastructure” ranked as their third and fourth biggest concerns at Grain Valley at this time.
- As illustrated below, during the first public open house and the follow-up online survey, participants in particular cited the need to have a road network to provide for future growth, and creating road designs that effectively serve all modes of travel, as the top transportation goals to address in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Respondents at the first public open house and online also supported the development of Grain Valley around a strong hierarchy of street types.
- Respondents at the first public open house and online indicated that enhanced rail connections, introduction of commuter rail to Kansas City, and improved road facilities all represented important economic development objectives for the community.

**Figure 1: Q11. Which of the following transportation goals are most important to address in creating an updated comprehensive plan? (Choose up to 3.)**



- In terms of overall strategies for transportation planning, participants at the second public open house and online in particular favored creating incentives to create local jobs (and, in turn, reduce the length of commutes), planning for density around “centers” in Grain Valley in order to encourage walkability, and participating with Metro (the transit agency serving Kansas City and Jackson County) to provide bus and transit services to the community.

## Future Transportation Plan

The future transportation plan for Grain Valley incorporates a number of key recommendations for future transportation and transit improvements in the community over the next twenty years. The public reviewed preliminary and final versions of the transportation plan at the second and third public open houses, respectively.

### I-70 and Lefholz Road

The City will actively promote and work to develop a new interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, in the eastern part of Grain Valley, in order to provide access to new development areas in the community east of Sni-A-Bar Creek. In conjunction with the interchange improvement, the city will work to upgrade Lefholz Road as a major north-south arterial serving future growth in the eastern portion of the city. A future Lefholz Road alignment could connect several miles to the north, running due north from the interchange location. To the south of I-70, the transportation plan calls for Lefholz to curve around a half mile to the west as it passes near Monkey Mountain Park in order to align with the existing Hardsaw Road, which continues farther to the south into Jackson County.



*View Looking East from Existing I-70 & Lefholz Overpass*  
*Source: Design Workshop*

While the previous Comprehensive Plan discussed and recommended the introduction of a new interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, the current Comprehensive Plan strongly recommends that the City make the new interchange a key priority going forward. The future transportation and land use maps for the city now prominently show a new interchange at Lefholz and creation of a new north-south arterial connecting with the interchange. By prominently making the interchange a key priority for the City, Grain Valley is laying the ground work to ensure that the new interchange ranks highly on lists and maps of future improvements outlined by MoDOT. Communities that step forward with clear goals for their future transportation needs and have the support of citizens for these priorities usually have better odds of gaining approval and funding for improvements from MoDOT. As MoDOT plans for future needs along I-70 over the next two decades, the Lefholz interchange is likely to rank as a higher priority given that Grain Valley has already incorporated the interchange into its future land use and transportation plans for the next 20-plus years. Given its proximity to the eastern edge of the community, planning for a potential interchange at I-70 and Lefholz would likely involve coordination between the cities of Grain Valley and Oak Grove going forward.

#### *I-70 and Tyer Road*

Similarly, the future transportation plan identifies the I-70 and Tyer Road area as a key location for a new interchange, serving the western part of Grain Valley and eastern parts of Blue Springs. This interchange faces more difficulties in implementation, compared to the Lefholz interchange, given that the area immediately around I-70 and Tyer is already built out and constructing an interchange at this location would require the acquisition and removal of a number of homes and businesses. As an alternative to creating a new interchange at the Tyer Road location, the Comprehensive Plan recommends that Grain Valley work to construct an overpass on Tyer Road over I-70. Completing this less complicated improvement would not provide access to I-70, however it would allow Tyer Road to provide another north-south connection across the interstate, thereby better linking the north and south halves of Grain Valley and relieving traffic congestion at the I-70 and Main Street interchange.

#### *Tyer Road Alignment Improvements*

The future transportation plan calls for Tyer Road, to the north and south of I-70, to be improved with curbs and sidewalks and related enhancements (such as turn lanes, where necessary) in order to create an enhanced north-south arterial alignment, connecting both sides of the Grain Valley community. Assuming that the city is able to provide for at least an overpass improvement along Tyer Road, across I-70, the Tyer alignment and improvements would provide an alternative north-south route to Main Street / Buckner Tarsney and would help improve connectivity to the various neighborhoods in the northern part of Grain Valley and the smaller industrial parks along the north side of I-70 in the vicinity of Tyer Road. The improvements to Tyer could eventually connect this arterial to 40 Highway, to the south of I-70.

#### *Completion of Outer Roads Along Both Sides of I-70*

In line with long range plans outlined by MoDOT for the future of I-70 across the state, the future transportation plan identifies the completion of “outer roads” (often referred to as frontage roads in other parts of the country) on both the north and south sides of I-70, between Main Street and the eastern city limits. These outer roads would provide local access to properties that face I-70 and their completion would help support the development of various commercial businesses given the visibility to the interstate. The outer roads would also provide relief for other east-west roads in Grain Valley, such as old US 40 from Main

Street east to Monkey Mountain Park, and would relieve some degree of traffic that otherwise would use I-70 itself in moving from Main Street east to Lefholz Road. The Outer Road along the north side of I-70, between Main Street and Lefholz Road, is known as McQuerry Road in Grain Valley.

#### *Improvements to SW Eagles Parkway*

As noted, the city projects that daily traffic counts along SW Eagles Parkway may exceed 15,000 by 2020 and 20,000 vehicles per day, by 2030. This arterial currently has only one lane in each direction and the original roadbed of US 40 (which formerly followed the Eagles Parkway alignment) remains along most of the route, within Grain Valley. As development continues in the southern and southwest parts of the community, the City will likely need to upgrade SW Eagles Parkway. Improvements may include either a three lane section (with one lane in each direction, plus a center turn lane) or a four lane section (with two lanes in each direction). Planning for the future of SW Eagles Parkway should incorporate sidewalks on both sides and may also include bike lanes or sharrows to encourage biking and walking as modes of travel in this part of the community. The term “sharrows” refers to markings on a particular street that notify drivers and bicyclists that the particular street is intended to be shared between people driving and bicycling.

#### *Improvements to Buckner Tarsney Road*

Similarly, as development continues to the north and south of Grain Valley over the next few decades, the City may need to upgrade Buckner Tarsney Road to serve new neighborhoods and businesses. With the exception of the areas within a few blocks of the new I-70 interchange, Buckner Tarsney currently operates as a two lane state highway. Over time, the road may need to expand to two lanes in each direction to serve new development. Again, the City should work to incorporate improvements to the arterial that would serve people biking and walking, including sidewalks, bike lanes, and sharrows.



*Buckner-Tarsney Road, North of I-70, Looking North*  
Source: Design Workshop

### *Improvements to 40 Highway Between Blue Springs and Grain Valley*

As outlined in the 40 Highway Vision Plan, Grain Valley should continue to work with Blue Springs and its neighbors to the west to explore and implement potential improvements to 40 Highway in eastern Jackson County, including in Grain Valley. As areas along 40 Highway between Adams Dairy Parkway in Blue Springs and Main Street in Grain Valley continue to develop, Grain Valley should join with Blue Springs and MoDOT to plan for the enhancement of 40 Highway as an attractive parkway to serve new residential and commercial development and to create an attractive entrance into both communities.

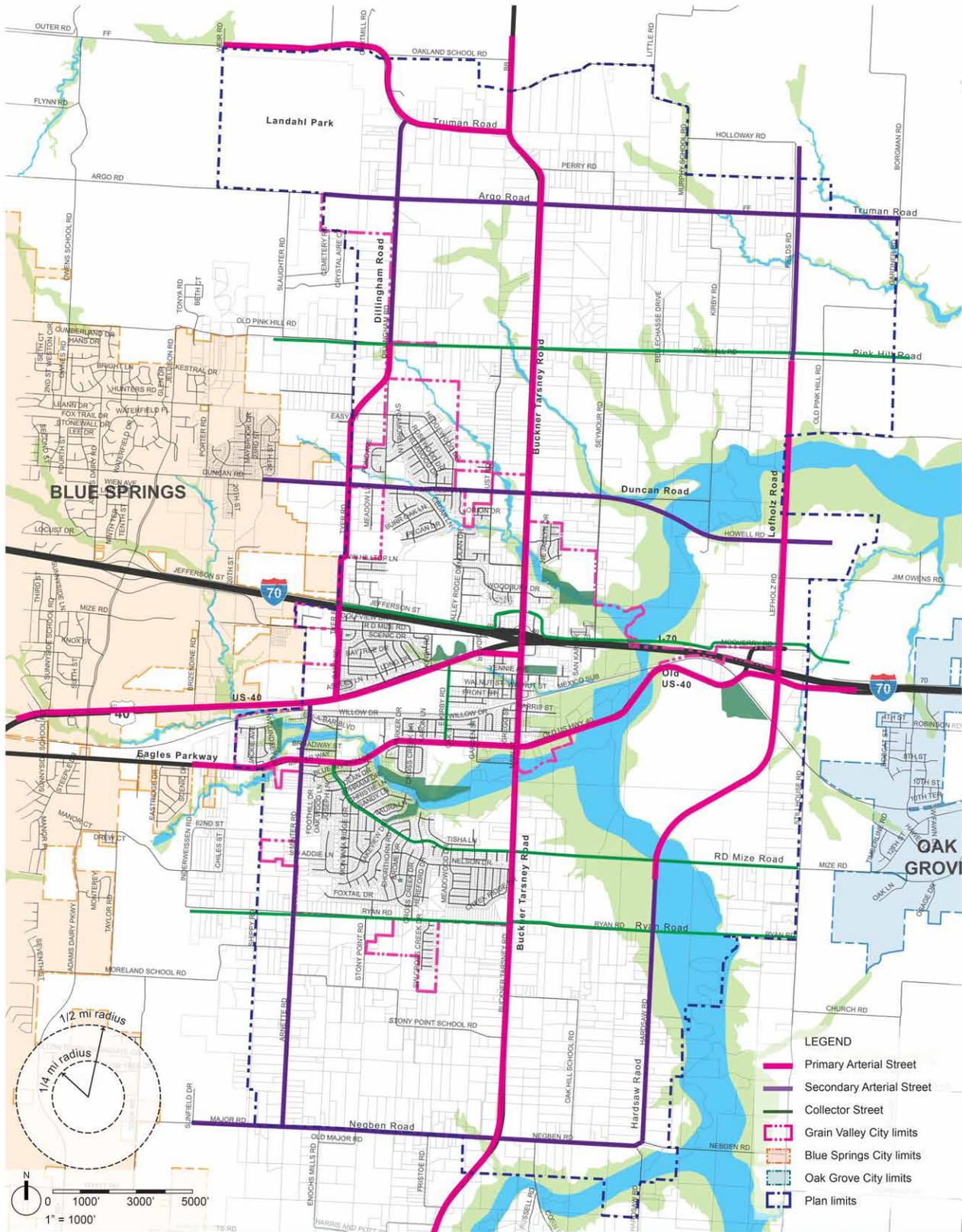
### Overall Transportation Vision

In addition to the improvements noted above, the Future Transportation Plan identifies additional roadway corridors and helps reserve them for future improvements as new development takes place. Without this type of plan in place, the continuity and connectivity of existing and future roadways in the areas surrounding Grain Valley cannot be guaranteed.

The Future Transportation Plan map that follows was developed using the future transportation plans of MARC as well as by input from the public and stakeholders throughout the Comprehensive Plan process. Typically, the three highest classifications of roadways (freeways, arterials, and collectors) are graphically shown on a Future Transportation Plan (also known as a Master Thoroughfare Plan), which is subsequently adopted as part of the City code. This plan identifies the approximate location and alignment of existing and future arterials and collectors. In general, arterials follow the existing grid network of county roads and are spaced at one-half to one-mile intervals, and collectors at one-quarter to one-half mile intervals. The Future Transportation Plan avoids environmentally sensitive lands, such as the floodplain areas that follow Sni-A-Bar Creek, where practical.

All of the proposed arterials shown will eventually incorporate four travel lanes. The City should work to provide on-street bikeways (either bike lanes or sharrows) within the street sections of arterial routes.

Figure 2: Preferred Street Classifications



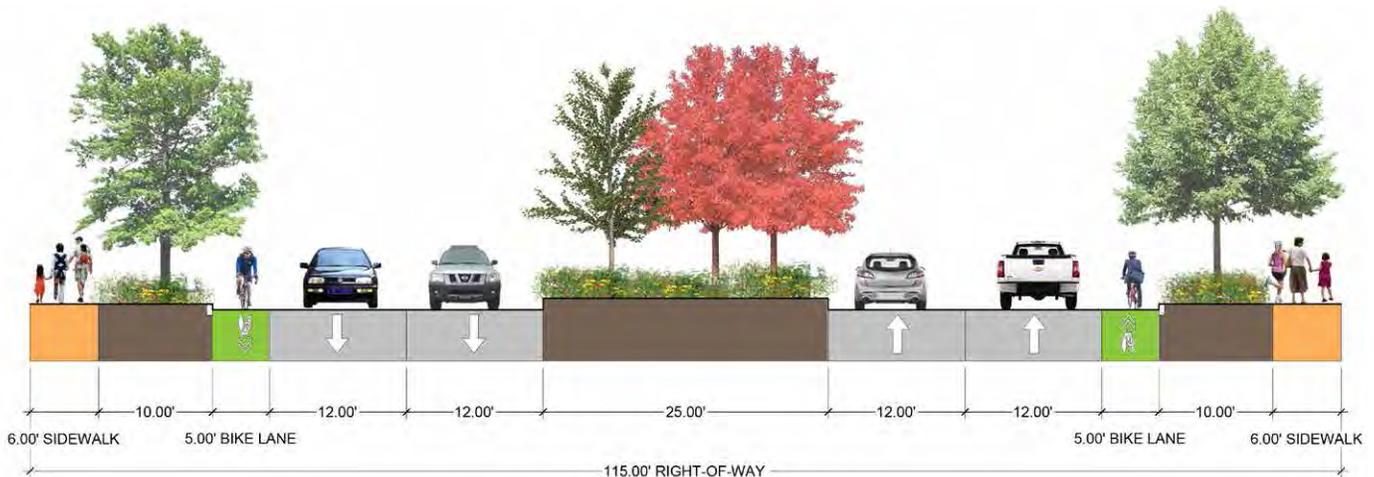
Source: Design Workshop

## Proposed Roadway Cross-Sections

The Future Transportation Plan outlines the recommended street sections for various types of streets in Grain Valley going forward. The sections incorporate the concepts of “Complete Streets” in the planning for future streets in the community. “Complete Streets” refers to the overall concept that street corridors should effectively serve the interests of all modes of travel, including people walking or biking. Complete Streets provide accommodations for future public transit improvements. Importantly, Complete Streets include detailed recommendations for the dimensions of sidewalks, medians, landscape areas, and other dimensions that enhance the performance and viability of surrounding land uses. For example, as outlined below, Complete Street sections for “Main Streets” or key retail streets include recommendations, based upon experience in towns around the country, for sidewalk widths and aesthetic improvements (such as trees and plantings) that help to create a viable environment for retail, restaurant, and office developments.

The City will use the following sections as a guide for the design of various streets in the community in the future.

**Figure 3:** Arterial Parkway with Bike Lane



### Arterial Parkways

Arterial Parkways would include a total of 115 feet of Right of Way and include a landscaped median and a 10-foot wide landscape zone, along the two sides of the road, that would include appropriate street trees and plantings to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the parkway. The Parkway would include a five foot bike lane on each side as well as room for a sidewalk (or, alternatively, a multi-use path) on each side of the parkway.

The Kansas City area has a strong heritage of developing attractive parkways to connect different neighborhoods, retail districts, and various communities. Based originally on plans developed by George Kessler and other prominent landscape architects, parkways such as Ward Parkway and Brush Creek Parkway in Kansas City have become some of the most desired and attractive corridors in the region. Similarly, suburbs on both sides of the state line have developed parkways in recent decades in order to create attractive corridors for residential neighborhoods and commercial developments. Little Blue Parkway in Independence and Adams Dairy Parkway in Blue Springs are examples of attractive suburban

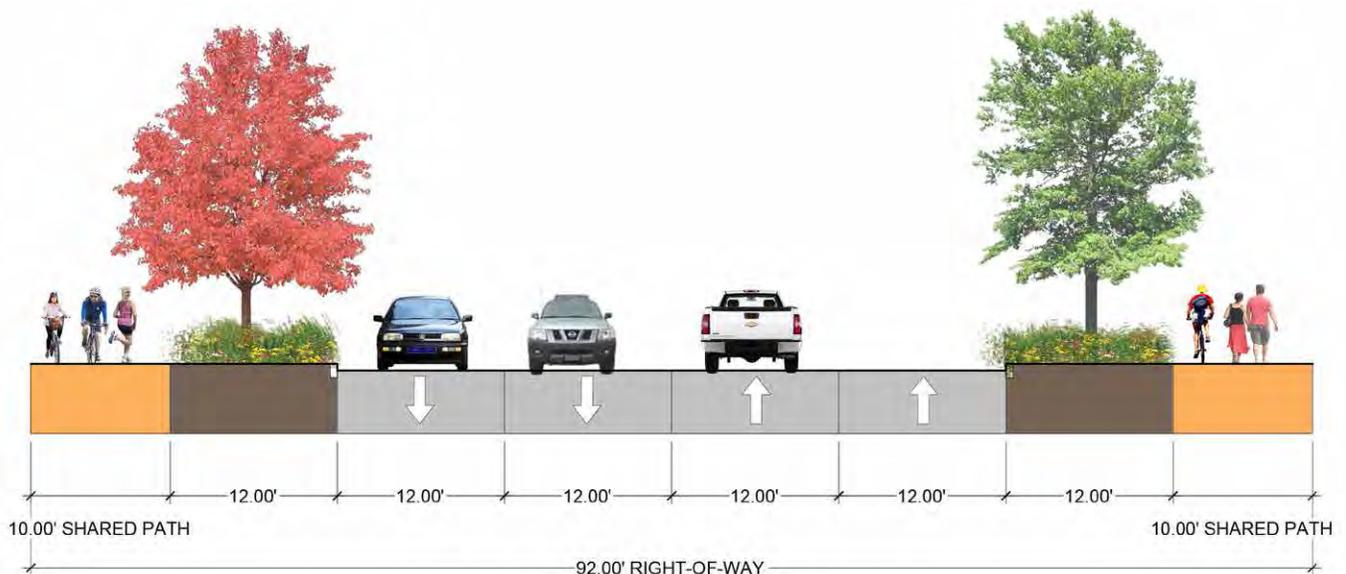
corridors near Grain Valley that serve prominent developments and may in the future anchor office parks and other employment centers.

Going forward, the Lefholz Road corridor, in particular, may represent an opportunity for Grain Valley to develop a Parkway that would create an attractive “front door” for the community for visitors entering from the east. A “Lefholz Parkway” could help set the stage for attractive and successful residential developments to the east of Sni-A-Bar Creek, as well as key retail developments near the potential I-70 and Lefholz interchange. A Lefholz Parkway could also include multi-purpose trails on either side that could tie into trails that run along Sni-A-Bar Creek or connect with other trails in the Monkey Mountain Park area. The Future Transportation Plan recommends that the City work to develop some of the future



Example of a Parkway with Multi-Purpose Trail: Prairie Star Parkway, Lenexa, Kansas  
Source: Design Workshop, Inc.

Figure 4: Arterial Street with Shared Path

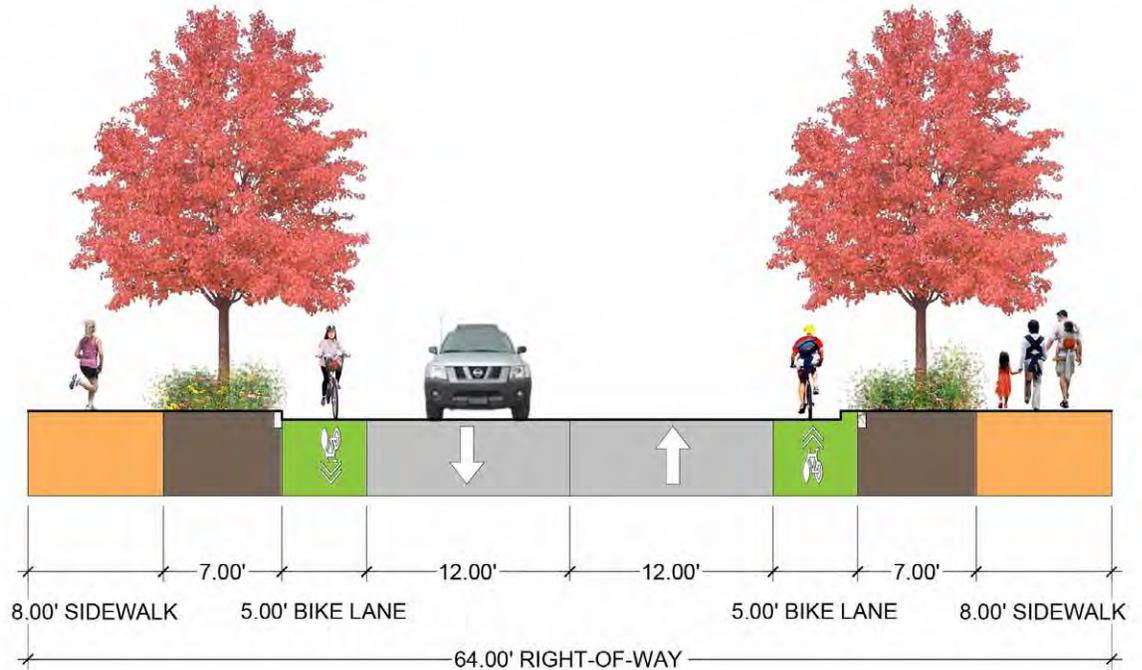


arterial routes in the community, such as Lefholz, as attractive parkways to set the stage for attractive and well-planned growth in the future.

### *Arterial Streets With Shared Path*

As an alternative to the Parkway approach, future arterials in Grain Valley may include two lanes in each direction (without a median) as well as a shared path (for bicyclists and people walking) on either side. This approach would be useful in cases where less right of way is available for the design of future arterial routes. Alternatively, future arterials could include a wider shared path on one side of the street, and a standard sidewalk on the other side of the street, in order to reduce overall costs and to plan for narrower right of way dimensions.

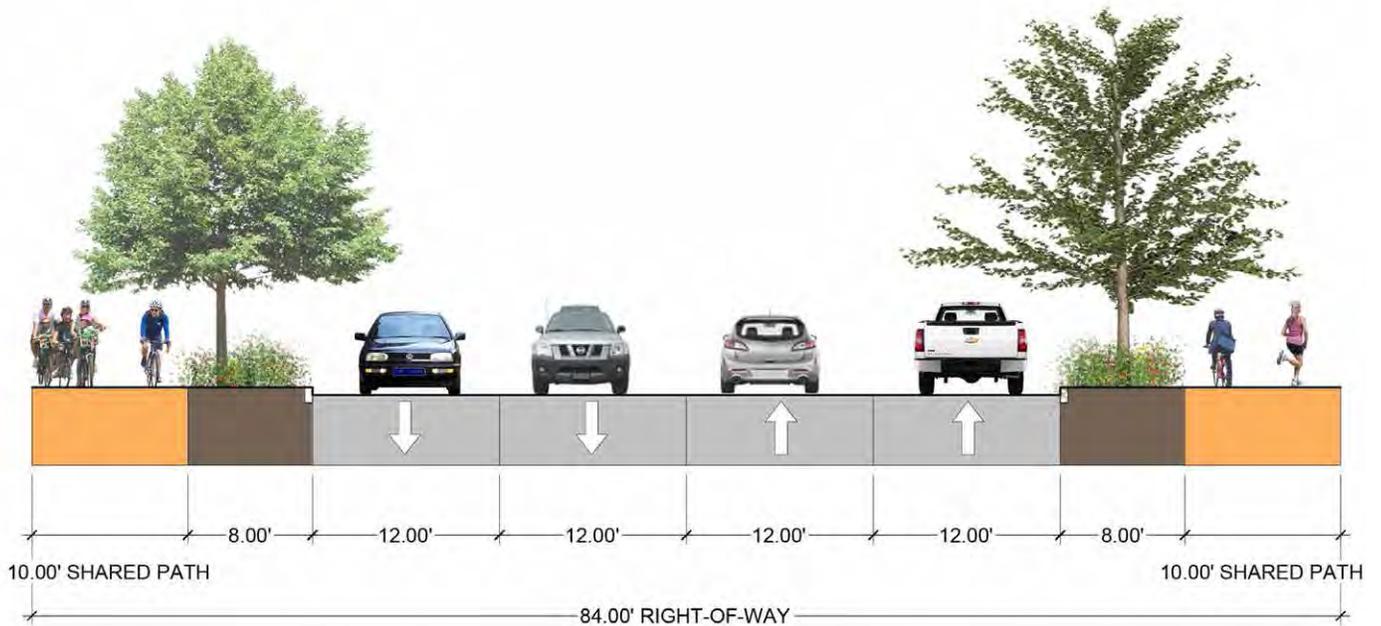
**Figure 5:** *Minor Collector with Bike Lane*



### *Options for Collector Streets*

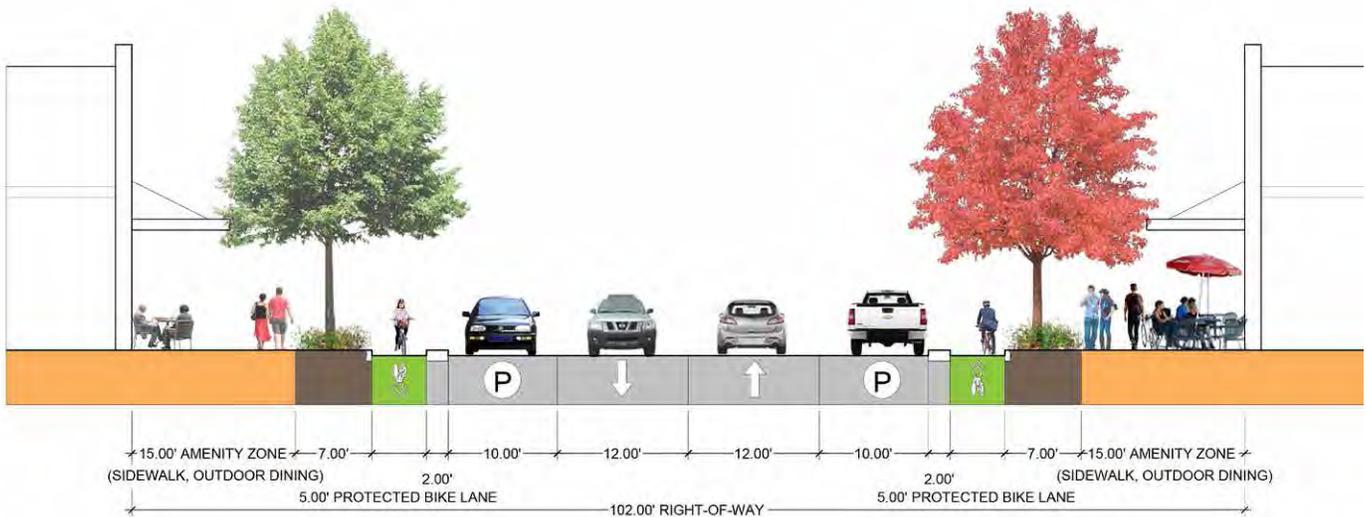
The City may design future Collector Streets in the community using three different templates outlined as follows. A Minor Collector Street may include a bike lane on each side, along with sufficient space for tree plantings and other landscape, as well as an 8-foot sidewalk for running or walking, on either side.

Figure 6: Major Collector Street with Shared Path



Alternatively, a Collector Street within a retail or office area could include two lanes in each direction, room for on-street parking in each direction, and a protected bike lane. Importantly, this street section provides for sufficiently wide sidewalks on either side of the street to support outdoor dining or active and successful retail businesses. Research from throughout the country has demonstrated that sidewalks in retail districts must include sufficient widths (of at least 15 feet, and perhaps as much as 20 feet) to provide a conducive environment for shopping and for outdoor dining.

Figure 7: Collector Street with Pedestrian Orientation



## Neighborhood Streets

The diagrams that follow outline a few options for the design of future Neighborhood Streets in Grain Valley over the next few decades. In the first option, a neighborhood street could include a total street width (from curb to curb) of 26 feet, including one lane in each direction plus a bike lane on each side. In the second option, a neighborhood street could include a total street width (from curb to curb) of 38 feet, including one travel lane in each direction, plus room for on-street parking on either side. As illustrated in the diagram, the travel lane could include demarcations for a “sharrow”, in which bicyclists would share the road with automobile traffic.

Figure 8: Neighborhood Street with Bike Lane

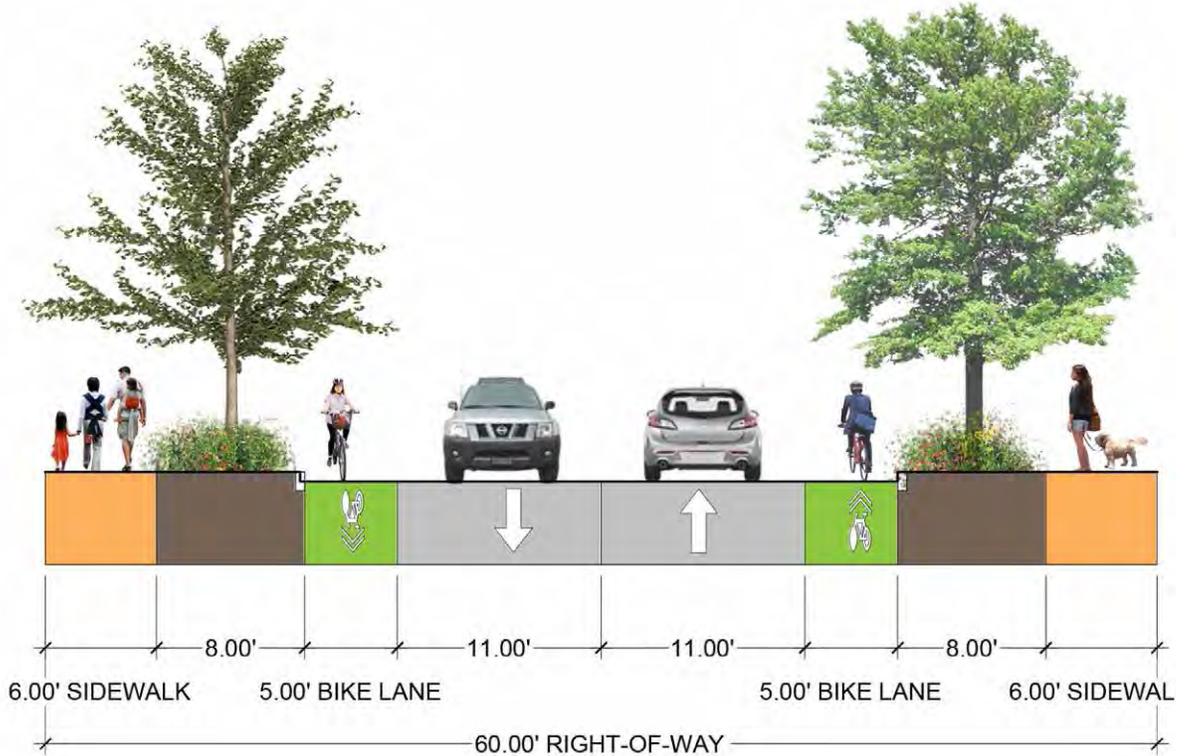
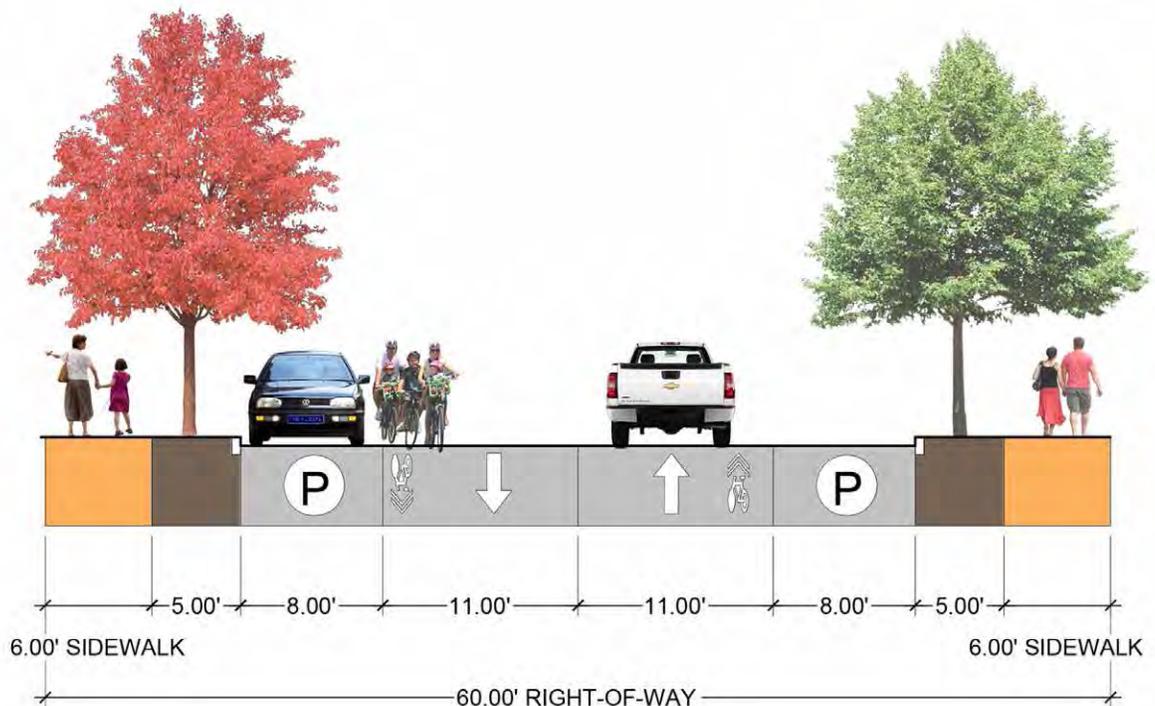


Figure 9: Neighborhood Street with On-Street Parking



*“Destination Streets”*

As discussed elsewhere in the document, the City will work with developers and property owners going forward to ensure that the “Main Streets” within key village centers, the downtown of Grain Valley, and other key districts in the community evolve into true “destination streets” that serve as centers of activity for Grain Valley. Destination Streets function similarly to the Main Streets found in small towns around the country and are designed using the best practices of streetscape design. They include wide sidewalks for retail shopping and outdoor dining, attractive streetscape amenities such as street trees, furniture, and facilities such as bike racks. For example, as discussed in this document, a Destination Street could emerge as part of a redevelopment effort for city-owned property located to the south and east of I-70 and Main Street. This destination street could serve as a key gathering place in the community and help to attract business from people passing by on I-70.

Destination streets may also emerge in other key “village center” locations elsewhere in Grain Valley going forward, in outlying areas. Just as the city of Kansas City grew over time to include several key districts, such as Brookside and Waldo, that served various local neighborhoods and have emerged as classic “destination” places for shopping, working, and gathering, the newer growth areas in Grain Valley could evolve over time to include a number of “Destination Streets” as part of village centers or local districts.

Figure 10: Destination Streets



A Major Collector Street could include two lanes of travel in each direction, as well as an 8 foot strip for trees and landscaping, and a 10 foot wide shared use path (for pedestrians as well as bicyclists).

## Access Management and Speed Limits

The term “access management” refers to the process of outlining standards for the installation of driveways or similar access points for various types of roads and streets. Communities design standards for the spacing of driveways along different types of streets in order to balance the need to provide access to properties with the need to provide safe and efficient movement of all modes of travel (vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian). The following general concepts guide the creation of access management standards in communities around the country.

In general, streets with higher speed limits should include fewer driveways (per mile or per block) than streets with lower speed limits. Streets that have higher speed limits, as well as a high number of driveways or curb-cuts, tend to have a higher rate of accidents. Along these types of streets or corridors, significant conflicts tend to occur between through traffic on the street, traveling at a higher rate of speed, and traffic turning in and out of individual driveways or curb-cuts. As outlined in the table that follows, an inverse relationship exists between the speed limit of a particular road and the number of driveways that should be allowed along the road. Streets or corridors that are designed to serve as “Destination Streets” should have speed limits that are low enough to provide for the safe movement of people walking and biking in the general area. In general, streets that are designed to allow for drivers to more easily see and access retail stores and restaurants should have lower speed limits.

Studies have shown that bicyclists or pedestrians hit by vehicles traveling at speed limits of 35 miles per hour or greater have a greater than 50 percent chance of dying from resulting injuries. In order to plan for a community that helps to support and encourage people walking and biking, Grain Valley should allow speed limits above 35 miles per hour only on higher capacity streets in the community, including key arterials.

The Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) outlines general standards for driveway spacings for different types of streets in a community, as part of the department's Access Management Guidelines. The City should refer to the MoDOT access management guidelines as the community moves forward with expansions of the street network or any reconstruction of existing collectors or arterial streets in Grain Valley. Importantly, the design

of individual streets and corridors should proceed on a case by case basis. Input from the community as well as nearby and adjacent property owners should help guide the design of various types of streets in the community in the future.

### *Context Sensitive Design*

Context Sensitive Design (CSD – also called Context Sensitive Solutions) refers to roadway standards and development practices that are flexible and sensitive to community values. CSD calls for roadway design decisions that better balance economic, social, and environmental objectives.

CSD is the art of creating public works projects that meet the needs of users, neighboring communities, and the environment. It integrates projects into the context or setting in a sensitive manner through careful planning, consideration of different perspectives, and tailoring designs to particular project circumstances.

Context Sensitive Design promotes six key principles:

- Balance of safety, mobility, community, and environmental goals in all projects.
- Involvement of the public and affected agencies early and continuously.
- Use of an interdisciplinary team tailored to project needs.
- Consideration of all modes of travel.
- Application of flexibility inherent in design standards.
- Incorporation of aesthetics as an integral part of good design.

Context sensitive design uses a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that includes early involvement of key stakeholders to ensure that transportation projects are not only “moving safely and efficiently”, but are also in harmony with the natural, social, economic, and cultural environment.

CSD requires an early and continuous commitment to public involvement, flexibility in exploring new solutions, and an openness to new ideas. Community members play an important role in identifying local and regional problems and solutions that may better meet and

balance the needs of all stakeholders. Early public involvement can help reduce expensive and time-consuming rework later on.

## Transportation Goals

### GOAL 1: THE CITY SHOULD CREATE AN OVERALL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT UNITES THE VARIOUS PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY

**Objective 1.1:** Provide a sufficient number of north-south connections to link areas north of I-70 with areas south of I-70

- Policy 1.1.1: Identify and pursue strategies to construct a new interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, to serve eastern portions of Grain Valley
- Policy 1.1.2: Identify and pursue strategies to construct either an overpass, or a full interchange, at I-70 and Tyer Road
- Policy 1.1.3: Identify and pursue strategies to provide a major arterial route along or near the Lefholz Road alignment, connecting the northeastern portion of Grain Valley with the southeastern portion of the community, to the south of I-70

**Objective 1.2:** Provide additional opportunities for connectivity from the north side of the Kansas City Southern railroad tracks to the south side

- Policy 1.2.1: Pursue, as part of planning for the area between Downtown and I-70, at least one additional vehicular crossing of the Kansas City Southern railway, to serve development and provide relief for traffic on Main Street
- Policy 1.2.2: Explore opportunities to provide for one or more bike and pedestrian crossings of the Kansas City Southern railway (through an underpass or grade separated facility)
- Policy 1.2.3: Enhance sidewalk and trail connections from the north to south sides of the Kansas City Southern railway to connect neighborhoods on either side, and to provide better connectivity in the Downtown areas
- Policy 1.2.4: As part of future planning for a commuter rail station in Grain Valley, ensure that the station area design provides for sufficient bike and pedestrian crossings from one side of the track to the other

### GOAL 2: ENSURE THAT THE GRAIN VALLEY TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM EFFECTIVELY SERVES ALL MODE OF TRAVEL IN THE COMMUNITY

**Objective 2.1:** Provide a street and trail network that allows for safe and efficient bicycle movement in and near Grain Valley

- Policy 2.1.1: Explore opportunities to include sharrows, bike lanes, or multi-purpose paths (providing access for pedestrians as well as bicyclists) along arterials and collector streets in Grain Valley.
- Policy 2.1.2: Develop strategies to complete the trail network, which includes several multi-modal paths for bicyclists, as outlined in this plan document.

- Policy 2.1.3: Identify opportunities to connect bike facilities in Grain Valley with bike routes and paths in adjacent communities (including Blue Springs and Oak Grove) as well as the broader Kansas City metropolitan area.
- Policy 2.1.4: Encourage new retail, civic, or office developments to include bike facilities (such as bike racks or similar storage facilities).

**Objective 2.2:** Provide facilities in the community to serve and encourage walking

- Policy 2.2.1: Develop a sidewalk plan for the community, to ensure that new developments provide sufficient sidewalks, and that plans are articulated to install new sidewalks on existing streets in the community (where gaps in the network exist).
- Policy 2.2.2: Develop strategies to complete the trail network as outlined in this plan document
- Policy 2.2.3: Encourage new developments to include sufficient street and sidewalk connections between different land uses (for example, between residential developments and nearby shopping areas).

**Objective 2.3:** Explore and pursue opportunities to provide transit services to the Grain Valley community

- Policy 2.3.1: Work with other communities in eastern Jackson County to explore opportunities to extend bus service provided by the Kansas City Area Transit Agency (KCATA) into the Blue Springs and Grain Valley areas.
- Policy 2.3.2: Work with other communities in eastern Jackson County to explore opportunities to provide bus service for senior citizen populations in the community
- Policy 2.3.3: Continue to work with other municipalities in the area, as well as Jackson County, to extend commuter rail service along the Kansas City Southern alignment into Grain Valley and eastern Jackson County.
- Policy 2.3.4: Work with other communities (including Kansas City, Independence, and Blue Springs) to explore opportunities to develop a Bus Rapid Transit line along US 40 Highway from Kansas City east to Grain Valley.

**Objective 2.4:** Provide future transportation facilities that effectively serve new development

- Policy 2.4.1: The City should require a traffic analysis for larger scale developments that could overload the existing system.
- Policy 2.4.2: The City should continue to use the Capital Improvements Plan to help budget and prioritize transportation improvements.



# 4

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND UTILITIES

The availability of utilities and public services, including in particular water and sewer infrastructure, provides the basis for growth of a community. Grain Valley must have sufficient infrastructure (including trunk lines for water and sewer) in place in order for new neighborhoods to develop, particularly on the edge of the community. Additional public services include schools, health, and emergency services. In order for new areas of town to be properly served by these services, the community must provide adequate consideration and planning for each category of public services. This section outlines the inventory of infrastructure and services available in Grain Valley and the prospects for expansion of these assets to service new developments.

### *Water and Sanitary Sewer*

The City of Grain Valley, through agreements and partnerships with the Tri-County Water Authority (“Tri-County”), has ample capacity in terms of water service, for existing land uses and future growth. Tri-County treats water for parts of Jackson, Cass and Bates counties in Missouri and provides water for the cities of Grain Valley, Blue Springs, Pleasant Hill, Lake Winnebago, and East Lynne. The City currently uses around one million gallons of water per day (“MGD”) versus existing volume capacity of 5 MGD, thereby providing ample capacity to service future growth. The City’s existing Capital Improvements Program (CIP) includes projects to provide for booster pumps on the tank system in Grain Valley. Overall, the entire city is serviced and has sufficient capacity for future growth.

In terms of sewer, the entire city (within the current city limits) is adequately served by sewers, and the City also has collection facilities positioned to extend services to the areas along and to the west of Buckner Tarsney Road, and to the north of Duncan Road. The City of Grain Valley partnered and split the cost of the Blue Springs Sni-A-Bar wastewater treatment plant on Seymour Road several years ago, and while Grain Valley shares this WWTP with the City of Blue Springs and the portion of Blue Springs that drains into the Sni-A-Bar Creek basin, the City projects that the WWTP should service future growth fully over the next twenty years (based upon current population projections underlying this Comprehensive Plan).

*Goal 1: City facilities will sufficiently fulfill the functions necessary to accommodate a high level of services to residents in 2035.*

**Policy 1.1: Expand and replace existing facilities to meet future service needs or as they becoming functionally obsolete.**

- Action 1.1.1: Create a City-wide facility master plan.
- Action 1.1.2: Inventory and assess existing facilities and identify maintenance needs, accessibility issues, improvements, and expansions as part of the annual CIP review process
- Action 1.1.3: Investigate opportunities to share resources such as libraries, auditoriums, and athletic facilities with community partners.

*Goal 2: Water use per customer within the City will be reduced in order to lower costs and impacts associated with water treatment, maximize the potential for the water owned by the City, and encourage responsible water conservation practices by residents and businesses in the community.*

**Policy 2.1: The City will adopt a Water Master Plan to expand the City's water system to meet projected domestic demands and fire flows.**

- Action 2.1.1: Update the Water Master Plan every five years or sooner to reflect the actual conditions of the system and growth patterns.
- Action 2.1.2: Develop a water model system to accurately plan for improvements and extensions of existing infrastructure.

**Policy 2.2: Demonstrate commitment to the conservation of water.**

- Action 2.2.1: Intensify activities that result in the efficient and wise use of water such as introducing xeriscape standards for landscape and irrigation systems.
- Action 2.2.2: Consider installing cisterns for water capture and reuse in public buildings where effective.

*Goal 3: The water quality in waterways in the Grain Valley area will continue to meet or exceed federal and state standards and contribute positively to the water quality of downstream segments.*

**Policy 3.1: Enhance and protect the water quality resources of lakes, streams, and creeks.**

- Action 3.1.1: Work with MARC and surrounding jurisdictions upstream and downstream to address regional water quality.
- Action 3.1.2: Begin to monitor the water quality levels of Sni-A-Bar Creek.
- Action 3.1.3: Buffer surface water with appropriate measures to protect water quality.
- Action 3.1.4: Ensure stormwater detention areas are designed to protect water quality and open space amenities.
- Action 3.1.5: Introduce maximum impervious cover requirements.
- Action 3.1.6: Create manual of best practice alternatives for materials and new technologies.

**Policy 3.2: Continue cooperative initiatives with other governmental entities to adopt and implement measures to reduce pollutants in the City's creeks.**

- Action 3.2.1: Continue to implement the Best Management Practices (BMP's) contained in the City's Stormwater Management Program.
- Action 3.2.2: Consider adoption of water quality regulations for the City's watersheds.

**Policy 3.3: Apply appropriate preventative measures to protect against the risks of flooding and implement mitigation strategies to avoid future losses.**

- Action 3.3.1: Monitor at-risk flood areas and utilize communication channels to warn the public of potential flooding occurrences.
- Action 3.3.2: Work with Blue Springs, Oak Grove, and other jurisdictions to develop and adopt a Regional Stormwater Master Plan.

*Goal 4: Grain Valley will manage its wastewater and reuse program in order to reduce the use of potable water for irrigation, reduce the costs and impacts associated with water treatment, and maximize the potential for the water owned by the City.*

**Policy 4.1: The City will continue to implement its Wastewater Master Plan to expand the wastewater system to meet wastewater flow projections.**

- Action 4.1.1: Update the Wastewater Master Plan every five years or sooner to correlate the planned construction of wastewater facilities with actual conditions and growth patterns.

**Policy 4.2: The City will adopt a Reclaimed Wastewater Master Plan identifying the major components of the system related to the City's WWTP.**

- Action 4.2.1: Prepare Reclaimed Wastewater Master Plan consistent with the City's Wastewater Master Plan.
- Action 4.2.2: Pursue reclaimed water agreements with potential users.
- Action 4.2.3: Investigate opportunities to establish funding for reclaimed wastewater improvements in the adopted CIP.

*Goal 5: Grain Valley's utility infrastructure will support planned growth and development in order to allow future growth to occur in the desired pattern and maintain the current high quality of life in the community.*

**Policy 5.1: Base CIP priorities on the Comprehensive Plan's Preferred Land Use Vision Map.**

- Action 5.1.1: Prepare revised Utility, Roadway, Drainage, Parks and Recreation, and other Public Facility Master Plans based on the goals of the updated Comprehensive Plan.
- Action 5.1.2: Adopt policies to encourage growth contiguous to existing development and to discourage leap-frog development.
- Action 5.1.3: Continue to correct any current or future deficiencies in utility service within the City limits.

**Policy 5.2: Grain Valley will continue to coordinate with other public entities that operate facilities to ensure the efficient delivery of services in Grain Valley.**

- Action 5.2.1: Coordinate future development plans with Jackson County Emergency Services.

*Goal 6: Grain Valley's CIP will support the Comprehensive Plan in order to ensure funds are being spent on capital improvements most likely to fulfill the vision of the residents.*

***Policy 6.1: The City will establish funding strategies for utility improvements consistent with the Comprehensive Plan's Future Land Use Vision Map.***

- Action 6.1.1: Require that new development connect to existing infrastructure or pay for the expansion to service the development.
- Action 6.1.2: Seek and support cost-sharing agreements with developers whose projects are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other Facility Master Plans.
- Action 6.1.3: Evaluate on an annual basis funding mechanisms for the needed improvements including adjustments to the utility fees.
- Action 6.1.4: Consider adoption of other funding mechanisms including assessments for roadway and drainage improvements and the establishment of a Drainage Utility Fee.
- Action 6.1.5: Establish annual budgets that provide funds to maintain and enhance existing facilities and construct new facilities.

***Policy 6.2: Develop the CIP to incorporate all aspects of the Comprehensive Plan including the Preferred Land Use Vision Map.***

- Action 6.2.1: Continue to enhance the City's CIP review process to include all City departments and fully integrate the prioritization and implementation of projects with the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Action 6.2.2: Prepare and adopt short range (5 year) and long range (10-15 year) CIP.

*Goal 7: Grain Valley's CIP will promote economic development consistent with the City's financial goals and objectives.*

***Policy 7.1: Grain Valley will continue its cooperative efforts with other governmental entities and developers to provide incentives for economic development within the City consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.***

- Action 7.1.1: Actively promote joint funding of CIP projects with other cities, Jackson County, the State of Missouri, and private entities.

***Policy 7.2: Prioritize extension of public utilities and transportation facilities into all areas planned for base employment uses.***

- Action 7.2.1: Support the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce by maintaining continued coordination between plans for future business expansions and the Grain Valley CIP to assure that adequate transportation, water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure is available to facilitate the creation of employment centers.
- Action 7.2.2: Include in the City's annual CIP review process projects that will improve the availability of infrastructure to potential employment centers.



# 5

## LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan presents a vision of how the Grain Valley community will grow in the future and where future land uses will be located. This section discusses how the various land uses related to one another and how the Preferred Land Use Plan was developed during the planning process. The Land Use Plan will serve as a guide to all residents, decision-makers and interested parties, showing how the Grain Valley community will develop over time.

The City of Grain Valley continues to move forward as one of the faster growing suburban communities in Jackson County and the Kansas City metropolitan region. Residential land uses represent a disproportionate share of the total land area within the existing city limits of Grain Valley, and in turn residents in the community rely heavily on adjoining and nearby communities (such as Blue Springs, Lee's Summit, and Kansas City) for shopping and employment opportunities. As the population of Grain Valley will continue to grow over the next few decades and suburban residential growth will continue, the City recognizes the imperative need to develop a diversity of land uses (including retail, office, business park, and industrial land uses in particular) to bring additional commercial revenue into the City and help reduce the overall tax burden in the community that currently falls heavily on residential property owners.

## Population Growth

The population of Grain Valley has increased by a multiple of nearly seven times over the last 22 years (from 1990 to 2012), increasing from a population of 2,132 in 1990 to an estimate of 13,246 in 2012. The population of Grain Valley has increased substantially as suburban growth has moved east from Blue Springs and the rest of the Kansas City metropolitan area. As a community positioned along the I-70 corridor, with access via freeways to the rest of the metropolitan region and good connections via the interstate to the rest of Missouri, this growth should continue over the next few decades. By 2035, the population is anticipated to grow to 32,089, an increase of nearly 19,000 over the current population (as of 2012). Based upon this population growth and an assumption that the number of people per household will remain relatively unchanged (from the current metric of 2.2 people per household as of 2012), there will be a projected demand for an additional xxx housing units in the City from 2012 to 2035.

The population projections for Grain Valley are based upon a linear extrapolation of the population growth patterns in the City since 2000, extended out through 2035. Importantly, this projection is anticipating average growth over a 22 year period. Given the normal cyclicity of the nation, between growth and recession, the community will likely not see even growth from year to year. However, by 2035 Grain Valley should reach the forecasted population levels, given current assumptions and patterns of growth in the area.

## Existing Land Uses

An examination of the existing land uses within Grain Valley provides a starting point for the analysis and projection of future land uses in the community. Zoning classifications of existing parcels and properties in the City do not necessarily tie with the existing land use. It is possible for a parcel to have a separate zoning classification and land use classification. For example, a property may be zoned as commercial but have farm or agricultural uses as the existing land use. In addition, whereas land use classifications are more general in nature, zoning classifications for a property are more specific. Official zoning designations in a community include various rules and regulations for permitted uses, densities of development, and other development-related regulations.

The following map identifies the locations of existing land uses in the community as of January 1, 2014 and the accompanying table outlines the breakdown of existing land uses by acreage and by percentage as of January 1, 2014.

**Table 2: Existing Land Use**

Land Use	Total Acreage	% of Total Acreage
Single-Family Residential	1,258.5	38.7%
Multi-Family Residential	162.1	5.0%
Commercial	116.6	3.6%
Industrial	400.0	12.3%
Public / Institutional	170.1	5.2%
Parks	127.3	3.9%
Agricultural / Undeveloped	832.8	25.6%
Vacant	181.6	5.6%
	3,249.0	100.0%

Source: City of Grain Valley

In general, the community has experienced significant residential growth with the development of a number of larger, suburban residential subdivisions over the last ten to fifteen years, including the Sni-A-Bar Farm area in the southern part of the city and the Rosewood Hills and Woodbury subdivisions to the north of I-70, and west of Buckner Tarsney Road. Grain Valley has experienced less growth in terms of retail, commercial, and industrial development since 1990, contributing to the community’s general nature as a “bedroom community” to the Kansas City metro area, in which residents work and shop to the west, in the more established parts of the metro area, and commute home to live in Grain Valley.

### **Residential Uses:**

Grain Valley is primarily known as a residential-oriented community, and the existing residential land use base includes two classifications – Single Family Residential, accounting for nearly 39 percent of the total acreage in the City, and Multi-Family Residential, accounting for around 5 percent of the City’s existing acreage (within the current City Limits). The multi-family designation includes duplexes, apartments, group homes, and three and four family dwellings.

Grain Valley's status as a bedroom community for the Kansas City metropolitan area contributes to the large percentage of existing acreage in the City identified as Single-Family Residential. The community's existing single-family housing stock includes starter homes, patio homes, somewhat higher density homes, as well as upper-end homes. Creekside Village along the north side of I-70, developed during the mid 2000s, represented the community's first higher density single-family planned unit development. Patio homes can serve as starter homes and can also serve the needs of seniors and handicapped individuals.



*Recent Townhome Construction in the Greystone Development (east of Buckner-Tarsney and south of Duncan Road)  
Source: Design Workshop*



*Residential Development in the Woodbury Neighborhood  
Source: Design Workshop*

**Commercial Uses:**

Grain Valley has historically lacked a sizeable retail and commercial base to serve the needs of local residents. The development of the Adams Dairy Landing area, near I-70 and Adams Dairy Parkway in Blue Springs, introduced a large area of retail uses within a five minute drive of most of Grain Valley. Key retailers at Adams Dairy Landing include Home Depot, Target, Kohls, and a variety of smaller retailers and restaurants that serve customers in Blue Springs as well as Grain Valley. The opening of the Walmart Supercenter at the Oak Grove exit off of I-70 also absorbed part of the retail spending from Grain Valley-area residents. Because of the presence of these larger areas of retail just to the west and east of Grain Valley, the community has experienced more modest retail development in recent years, and the community continues to lack a sizeable pool of retail space that would provide significant retail sales tax revenues to the city.

Commercial uses in Grain Valley include any use that could be found in the commercial zoning classifications (C-1, C-2, C-3, C-B) or the Downtown Overlay District. These uses generally include walk-in oriented, customer-oriented retail businesses. The majority of commercial uses in Grain Valley are along Main Street / Buckner Tarsney Road and along SW Eagles Parkway. The largest developed retail area in the community is the Old Towne Marketplace, at the southwest corner of Main Street and SW Eagles Parkway. This development includes XXX square feet of retail and restaurant space, as well as the city's only grocery store, Patricia's. With the completion of interchange improvements at I-70 and Main Street in early 2014 and the recent upgrades and widening of 40 Highway, to the west of Main Street, the city is beginning to see additional retail development around the I-70 interchange area. New locations for McDonald's and Advance Auto Parts have opened along the west side of Main Street, and south of 40 Highway, within the last two years. The Grain Valley Marketplace development, to the north and east of I-70 and Main Street, includes a B&B Theatres Grain Valley Marketplace 9 Cinema (8 screens) and has plans to include two additional areas of in-line of retail space, as well as three restaurant spaces along the Outer Road serving I-70 (to the east of Main Street). Property owners on the northwest, southeast, and southwest corners of the new I-70 interchange are considering various options for the development or redevelopment of their properties, ranging from highway-oriented retail uses (such as upgraded gas stations) to hotel or motel uses, to general retail uses.



*B&B Theatres in the Grain Valley Marketplace development  
Source: Design Workshop*



*Shopping Center at Buckner Tarsney Road and SW Eagles Parkway  
Source: Design Workshop*

***Industrial:***

Industrial land uses currently comprise only five percent of the land area within the City limits. The development of industrial uses brings jobs to a community, thereby building the property tax base of a city and helping to attract new residents and, in turn, additional retail or commercial development.

As the community continued to grow during the 1990s and 2000s, local developers created several industrial zones in Grain Valley. To the north of I-70, the Valley Ridge Industrial Park is fully built-out, while the East Kansas City Industrial Park, along the north side of I-70, to the west of the Main Street interchange, is partially built out as of early 2014. The Breeze-way development also has an industrial section that remains mostly undeveloped. The largest industrial use south of I-70 is the East Kansas City Airport, which is wedged between US 40 Highway, Kirby Road, Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, and the Kansas City Southern Railway. A small industrial development located in a phase of Blue branch has seen some industrial growth in recent years. The areas to the east of the Grain Valley Community Center, between James Rollo Drive and I-70, also include various light industrial land uses and may see additional development, given the recent completion of interchange improvements at I-70 and Main Street.



*Business Park development along NW Jefferson Drive  
Source: Design Workshop*

**Public / Institutional Uses:**

This land use classification typically includes buildings or properties owned by the City, County, State, or Federal government, or by a local school district. Communities with a greater degree and variety of services and amenities available to the public tend to have a higher percentage of total acreage classified as public or institutional uses. Within the Grain Valley city limits, the public and institutional uses currently account for 5.2 percent of total land area and include the City Hall / Police Station complex, the Grain Valley Community Center, the local post office and library, and various school properties owned by the Grain Valley School District. Communities ideally distribute the various areas of public facilities and amenities geographically in order to provide an equal level of services to all residents. As the city continues to grow, providing geographic balance in the planning of public facilities will remain an important consideration.

**Parks:**

Parklands are public open spaces that offer many amenities to the residents of a community. Parks add important aesthetic appeal to various areas within a community, can serve as buffers between different land uses, provide recreational opportunities, increase surrounding land values, and are compatible with most other land uses. Parks serve as public gathering places and are often the location of special events and other civic gatherings. The importance of good parks in a community cannot be underestimated. While the City has acquired additional parkland over the last ten years, overall the community has a deficiency in the number and variety of parks within the current city limits.

***Agricultural / Undeveloped:***

Agricultural or undeveloped lands account for a quarter of the total acreage within the city limits, which represents a sizeable and above average share of total acreage for a community of this size. This share of total land area should continue to decrease as developers continue to convert vacant or agricultural parcels around Grain Valley into additional residential or commercial projects. In addition, the calculation of undeveloped lands includes a significant area of lands (particularly near streams and floodplains, such as along Sni-A-Bar Creek) that may be impractical to develop going forward.

***Vacant:***

Vacant lands, accounting for just over five percent of the City's incorporated area, includes land that is platted but not yet built upon, as well as properties that have remained vacant for an extended period of time.



*Agricultural lands to the southeast of I-70 and Lefholz Road  
Source: Design Workshop*

## Creation of Alternative Land Use Plans and Preferred Land Use Plan

The project team drew from the results of questions asked as part of the Community Survey, at the beginning of the project, as well as questions asked during the Initial Public Open House in January 2014, the Second Public Open House in February 2014, and the Final Public Open House in April 2014, in developing Alternative Land Use Plans and the eventual creation of a Preferred Land Use Plan for the Grain Valley area. The following outlines the key findings and factors that guided the creation of these various iterations of the land use plan.

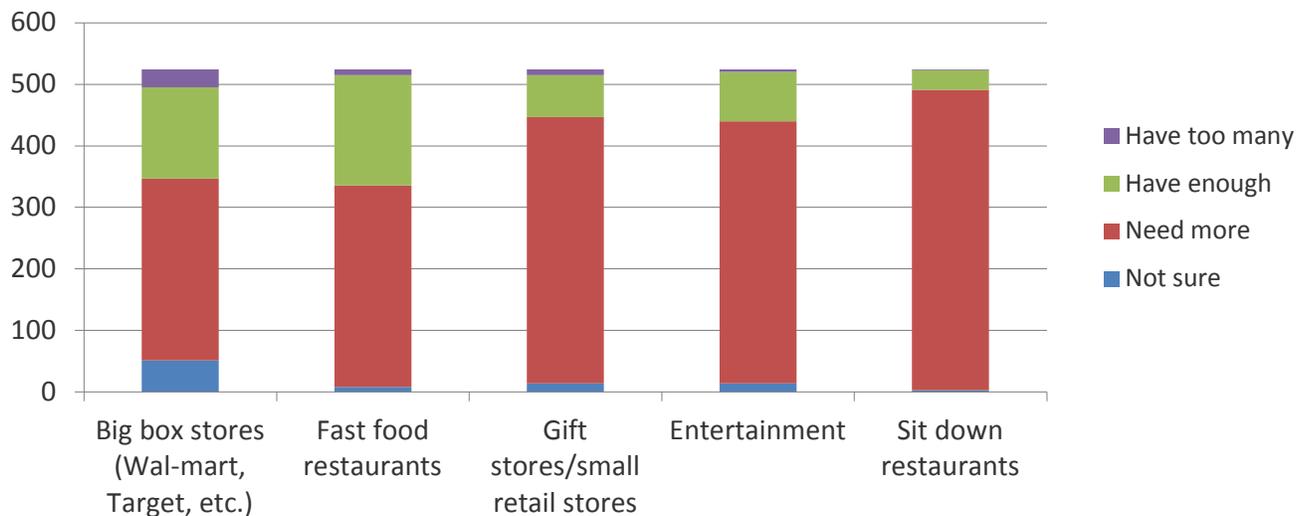
### Community Survey Input

General questions of the community concerning future development and land use, included in the Community Survey, provided initial guidance concerning the desires of the community for future land uses in the Grain Valley area. Specifically, of the 584 Community Surveys completed from October 2013 – February 2014:

- 226 people, or approximately 40 percent of all respondents, cited “an increase in employment opportunities” as one of four things that would improve the quality of life in Grain Valley.
- 344 people, or approximately 61 percent of all respondents, cited a “decrease in taxes and fees” as one of four things that would improve the quality of life in Grain Valley.
- 363 people, or approximately 64 percent of all respondents, cited an “expansion of retail shopping options” as one of four things that would improve the quality of life in Grain Valley. Furthermore, as outlined in Figure 1, respondents expressed the desire for a greater number retail establishments across all categories (including big box, fast food restaurants, gift stores / small retail, entertainment, and sit-down restaurants).

Figure 11: Results from Community Survey, Question 10

**Q10. Please share your opinion about the supply of retail options in the City.**

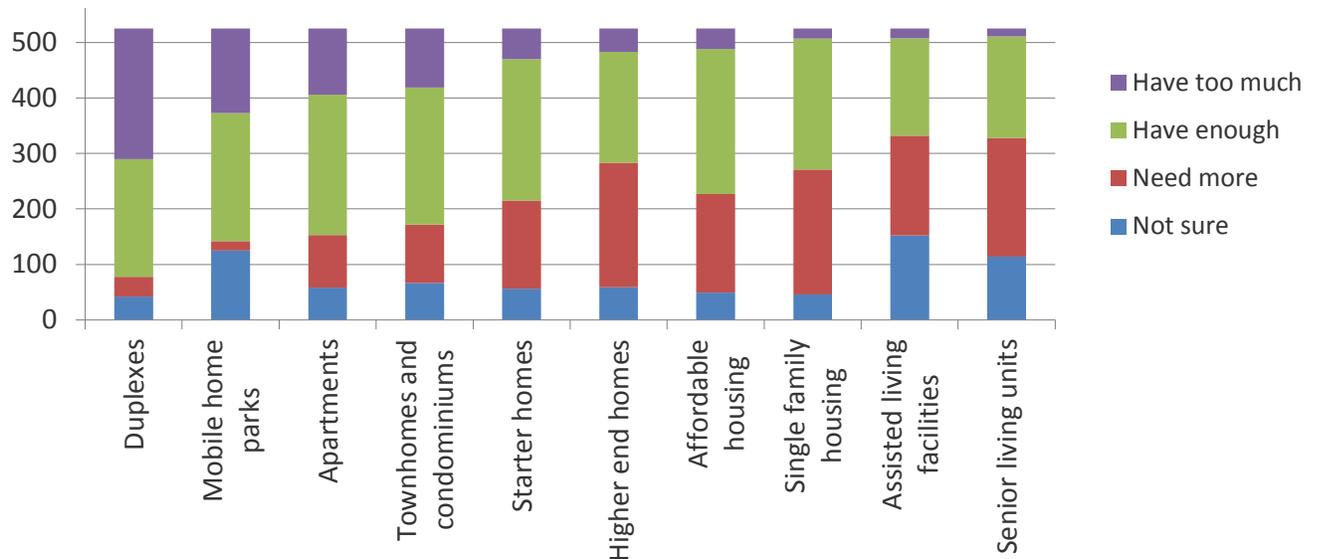


Source: Design Workshop

As illustrated as follows, respondents to the community survey expressed the desire to see a greater supply, in particular, of senior housing units, assisted living facilities, single family housing, and higher end homes in Grain Valley in the future. Over half of respondents to the Community Survey saw the area around the I-70 and Main Street exit as evolving to represent the “heart” of Grain Valley in the future.

Figure 12: Results from Community Survey, Question 8

**Q8. Please share your opinion about the supply of various housing types in the City.**



Source: Design Workshop

### Initial Public Open House, January 2014

Questions related to future land use and development, posed as Keypad Polling questions during the Initial Public Open House (and, in an online version of the keypad polling survey, after the initial open house) provided input that guided the creation of alternative future land use plans for the Grain Valley area. Specifically, of the responses received at the Initial Public Open House (and, in the online version of the Keypad Polling questions at this initial meeting):

- When asked to select the most important topics to address in the Comprehensive Plan, the top two answers selected included:
  - Expanding retail / commercial areas in the City (21 percent); and
  - Expanding the economic base of the City (17 percent)
- When asked to select their top concerns for Grain Valley, the top two answers selected included:
  - The lack of commercial / retail options for residents (27 percent); and
  - A lack of job opportunities (19 percent)
- A total of 66 percent of respondents believed it was either “very important” or “some-what important” to provide diversity in housing types in Grain Valley, going forward.
- In terms of future land planning, a total of 58 percent of respondents agreed that the community should be organized around “a set of centers”.

- A total of 61 percent of respondents agreed that the City's growth strategy should balance between expanding into new areas outside the City limits, and developing on vacant or infill parcels within the current limits
- A total of 62 percent of respondents agreed that, as it grows, the City should be active in preserving open spaces.
- From a menu of options, respondents chose the following as the best strategies to help economic development in Grain Valley:
  - Development of a new industrial / business park (20 percent of respondents)
  - Development of more restaurants / places to take clients (20 percent of respondents)
  - Constructing commuter rail to Kansas City (15 percent of respondents)

## Planning for Areas Beyond the Grain Valley City Limits

Cities normally outline Future Land Uses for unincorporated areas, outside existing city limits, as part of Comprehensive Plan documents. It is important to note that, while cities normally outline future land uses for unincorporated areas, doing so does not mean that any particular parcel or area located outside of the existing municipal boundaries is slated or scheduled to join a particular city, at any particular time. The articulation of future land uses merely indicates the vision of the community for how various areas located outside the city limits would eventually develop over time, whether particular parcels enter the city limits or not. In addition, outlining future land uses for areas that may join the city over time helps to prevent the development of particular uses in the near term that may not align well with principles designed to provide for a well planned community over time. For example, a community that envisions a given section of land just outside its city limits to eventually develop as single family residential would logically oppose the conversion of the particular area of land from farmland to a trash disposal facility, a strip club complex, or another use that would be viewed as incompatible with the community's vision for the area and its eventual development. In general, articulating the future desires of a community in terms of land use, transportation, parks, and other planning elements for areas outside its city limits allows a given city to speak proactively concerning the vision of the community as it expands and to plan proactively to ensure that developments outside city limit boundaries do not impede future growth or the achievement of the community's vision.

The most recent Future Land Use Plan adopted by the City of Grain Valley, dated March 17, 2010, only addressed areas as far north as Argo Road (west of Buckner Tarsney) and Pink Hill Road (to the east of Buckner Tarsney). To the south, the most recent future land use plan only addressed areas as far south as Ryan Road, to the west of Buckner Tarsney Road, and as far south as RD Mize Road, to the east of Buckner Tarsney Road. The current Comprehensive Plan addresses future land uses encompassing a larger area, stretching as far north as Truman Road, as far south as Major Road and Negben Road, as far west as the Blue Springs city limits, and as far east as the Oak Grove city limits, due to the following key reasons.

- As the community continues to grow outward, and as this Comprehensive Plan addresses future growth in Grain Valley through 2035, the boundaries of all maps (for Land Use, Transportation, and Parks and Open Space) logically will expand outward to encompass larger areas from the heart of the community.
- Jackson County lacks a future land use plan for unincorporated areas near cities such as Grain Valley and generally accepts most land use or zoning applications and building permits, without regard for the impacts such changes may have on nearby municipali-

ties. By articulating the vision of the community concerning future land uses and other planning considerations for a larger area surrounding the Grain Valley city limits, this plan will provide guidance to Jackson County authorities as they consider land use and related building applications in areas near the Grain Valley city limits and in the areas covered by this land use plan. While Jackson County is not legally bound or obligated to follow the recommendations outlined in the Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan, this document will likely have an influence on decisions at the county level, as the planning principles and plans in this document were developed with significant public input from the Grain Valley community and various constituencies.

- Over the last twenty years, neighboring communities to the east and west (Blue Springs and Oak Grove) have steadily annexed outlying properties, including many located relatively near to the Grain Valley city limits. By articulating the vision of the Grain Valley community concerning future land uses, transportation improvements, and park facilities, this document thus articulates the vision of the City in cases where adjoining cities have differing views concerning the future uses of land between the two communities. In addition, by proactively planning for areas located farther from existing city limits, Grain Valley is articulating in this plan document its vision for influence and potential control (through annexation) over particular parts of the county located within a few miles of the Grain Valley city limits. Failing to articulate the vision of the community for areas located farther from the existing city limits could result in nearby cities proactively annexing and then controlling various parcels that would have significant impact on Grain Valley. The future land use plan for Grain Valley, in a sense, is “marking the future, potential territory” of the community as it relates to its neighbors (Blue Springs, and Oak Grove).

#### *Overall Principles Underlying the Alternative Land Use Plans*

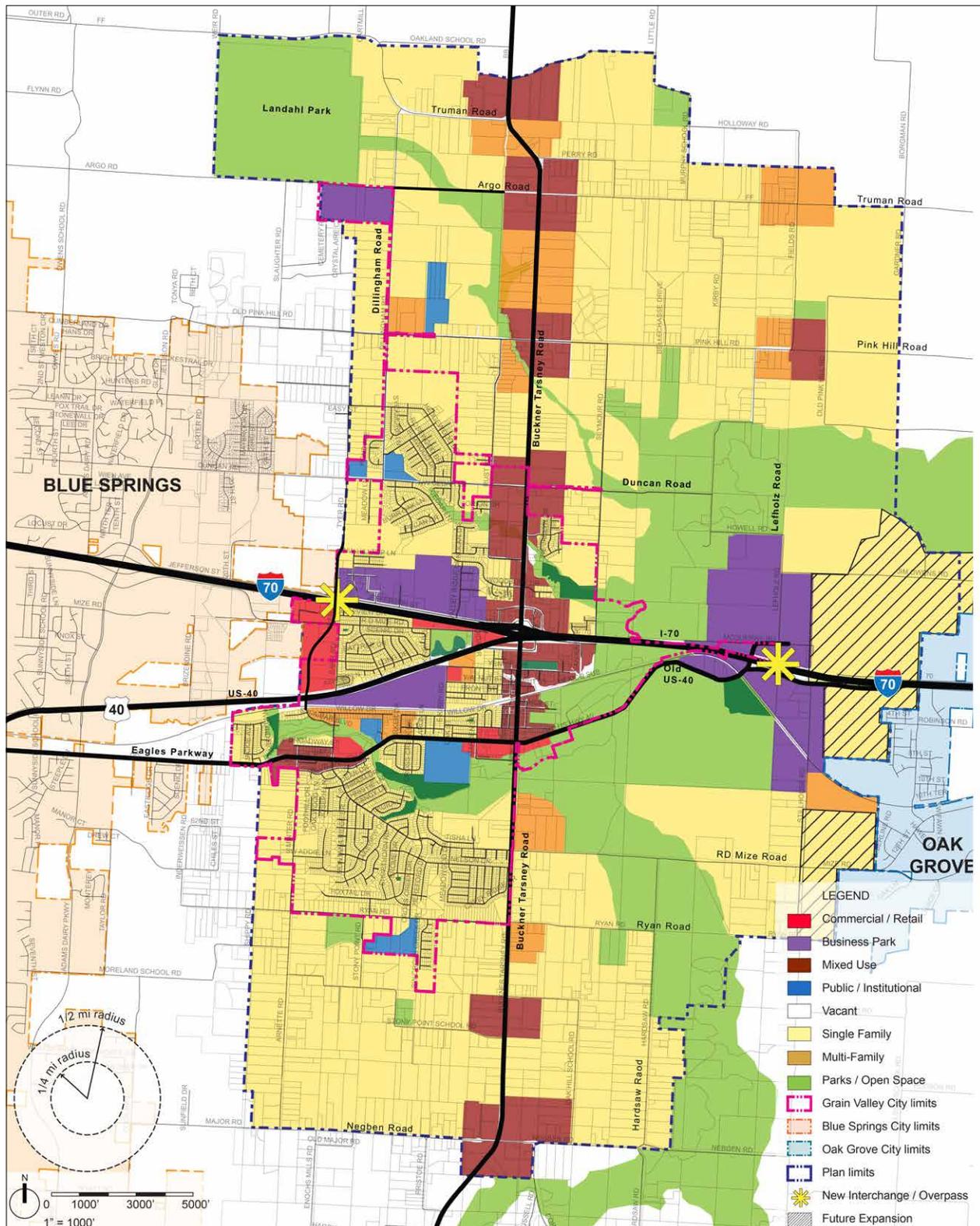
Drawing from the input from the community and stakeholders (as part of the Community Survey, from the Initial Public Open House, and through online survey questions associated with the Initial Public Open House), the following principles guided the development of the Alternative Land Use Plans for Grain Valley.

- The Alternative Land Use Plans should explore potential locations for business or industrial park to serve future growth
- Drawing from the initial transportation analysis and the desires of the community, the Alternative Land Use Plans should reflect potential new north-south connections, to link the south side of I-70 to the north side of town.
- The Alternative Land Use Plans should explore potential for various “centers” for future growth, to the south and to the north
- Preserve floodplains in the areas in and near Grain Valley as future parks or open space
- The Alternative Land Use Plans should reflect the expansion of trail connections throughout the community
- Provide diversity in terms of densities of development (for both residential and commercial land uses) around town

# Comparison of Land Use Alternatives One, Two, and Three

As reflected on the following pages, the various land use alternatives for Grain Valley, presented at the Second Public Open House on February 27, 2014, have several similarities, but differ in a few key ways. The following provides a summary of each Land Use Alternative.

**Figure 13: Land Use Alternative One**



Source: Design Workshop

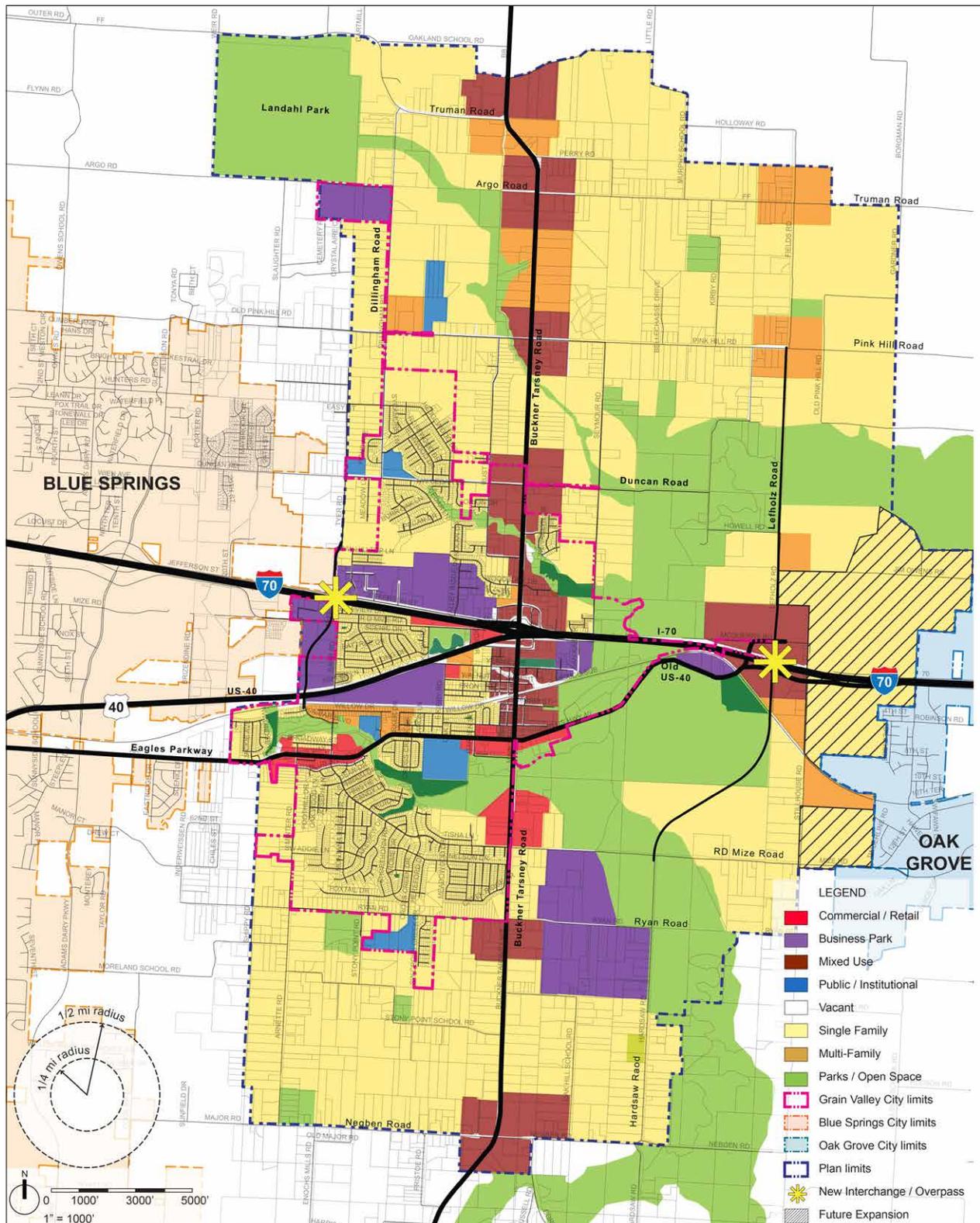
Land Use Alternative One includes the following key features:

- Most of the outlying areas, to the north and south of town, would be developed as Single Family Residential.
- Centers, or “nodes” of mixed use development would likely develop, every one-half to one-mile, along the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor, to the north and south of town.
- The floodplain-designated areas along Sni-A-Bar Creek and its tributaries would be preserved as park or open space going forward.
- Overpasses or interchanges would be constructed at I-70 and Lefholz Road and I-70 and Tyer Road to serve future developments on the west and east sides of town.
- The area around I-70 and Lefholz, on both sides of the freeway, would develop as business parks or industrial parks going forward, in order to provide ample space to attract new companies or support overall economic growth.
- The Lefholz Road corridor, in the northeast part of the planning area, would also include “centers” of mixed-use development at approximately one mile spacings.
- The area around City Hall and to the east, and to the south of I-70, would develop or redevelop as “mixed use” development over time.

Land Use Alternative Two includes the following key features:

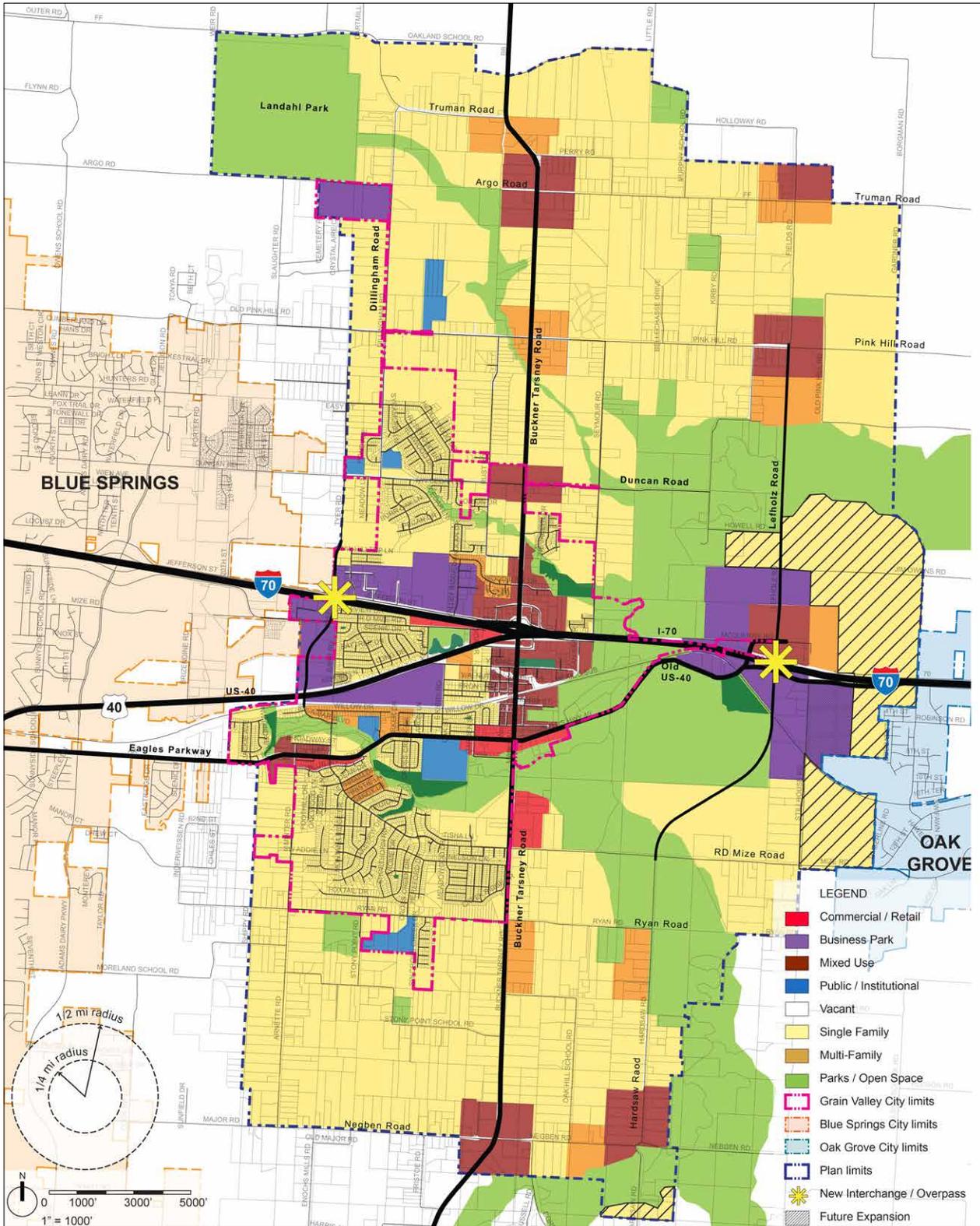
- Most of the outlying areas, to the north and south of town, would be developed as Single Family Residential.
- Centers, or “nodes” of mixed use development would likely develop, every one-half to one-mile, along the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor, to the north and south of town.
- The floodplain-designated areas along Sni-A-Bar Creek and its tributaries would be preserved as park or open space going forward. A business park would be developed to the south of town, and east of Buckner Tarsney Road.
- Overpasses or interchanges would be constructed at I-70 and Lefholz Road and I-70 and Tyer Road to serve future developments on the west and east sides of town. The Lefholz Road corridor would be more proactively planned as a north-south arterial or parkway connecting the northeast part of Grain Valley to the southeast part of the City, to the south of I-70. Land Use Alternative Two depicts the Lefholz corridor connecting to the south to the Hardsaw Road corridor, in the southeast part of the community.
- The area around I-70 and Lefholz, on both sides of the freeway, would develop as a “mixed use” area, including a mixture of retail space, multi-family and single family housing, and office or business uses.
- The Lefholz Road corridor, in the northeast part of the planning area, would also include “centers” of mixed-use development at approximately one mile spacings.
- The area around City Hall and to the east, and to the south of I-70, would develop or redevelop as “mixed use” development over time.

Figure 14: Land Use Alternative Two



Source: Design Workshop

Figure 15: Land Use Alternative Three



Source: Design Workshop

Land Use Alternative Three includes the following key features:

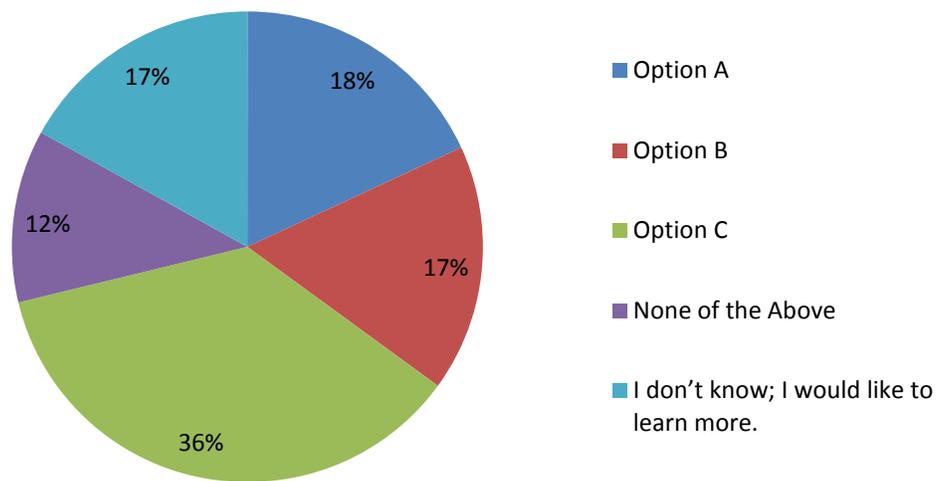
- Most of the outlying areas, to the north and south of town, would be developed as Single Family Residential.
- Centers, or “nodes” of mixed use development would likely develop, every one-half to one-mile, along the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor, to the north and south of town.
- The floodplain-designated areas along Sni-A-Bar Creek and its tributaries would be preserved as park or open space going forward.
- Overpasses or interchanges would be constructed at I-70 and Lefholz Road and I-70 and Tyer Road to serve future developments on the west and east sides of town.
- The Lefholz Road corridor would be more proactively planned as a north-south arterial or parkway connecting the northeast part of Grain Valley to the southeast part of the City, to the south of I-70. Land Use Alternative Two depicts the Lefholz corridor connecting to the south to the Hardsaw Road corridor, in the southeast part of the community.
- The area around I-70 and Lefholz would develop as a Business Park for Grain Valley, along the south side of I-70, and as a Mixed-Use area, including a mixture of retail, office, and business uses, as well as various types of residential development, to the north of I-70. This strategy locates the Business Park to the south of I-70 in order to take advantage of the adjacency of this area to the Kansas City Southern rail line, which runs east-west to the south of I-70, connecting Grain Valley with Mid-Missouri and the Kansas City metro area.
- The Lefholz Road corridor, in the northeast part of the planning area, would also include “centers” of mixed-use development at approximately one mile spacings. In contrast to land use options one and two, Land Use Alternative Three envisions the mixed-use centers along Lefholz developing as more prominent community centers over time, and assumes that the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor, to the north, would have less prominence over time compared to the Lefholz corridor.
- Land Use Alternative Three assumes that the area around I-70 and Tyer Road would develop as a Business Park over time in order to provide additional inventory of land to attract new businesses or provide space for existing business and employment uses in the Grain Valley area.
- The area around City Hall and to the east, and to the south of I-70, would develop or redevelop as “mixed use” development over time.

### Community and Stakeholder Input Concerning the Land Use Alternatives

Input from the public, at the Second Public Open House on February 27, 2014 and via an online version of the Keypad Polling Session held at the open house, generally supported Land Use Alternative Three over the other two alternatives. Specifically, 36 percent of respondents to the survey questions supported Land Use Alternative Three, compared to 18 percent for Option One and 17 Percent for Option Two.

Figure 16: Survey Question 11 from Second Public Open House and Online Input

Q11. I am in favor of the following Future Land Use alternative for Grain Valley as illustrated:



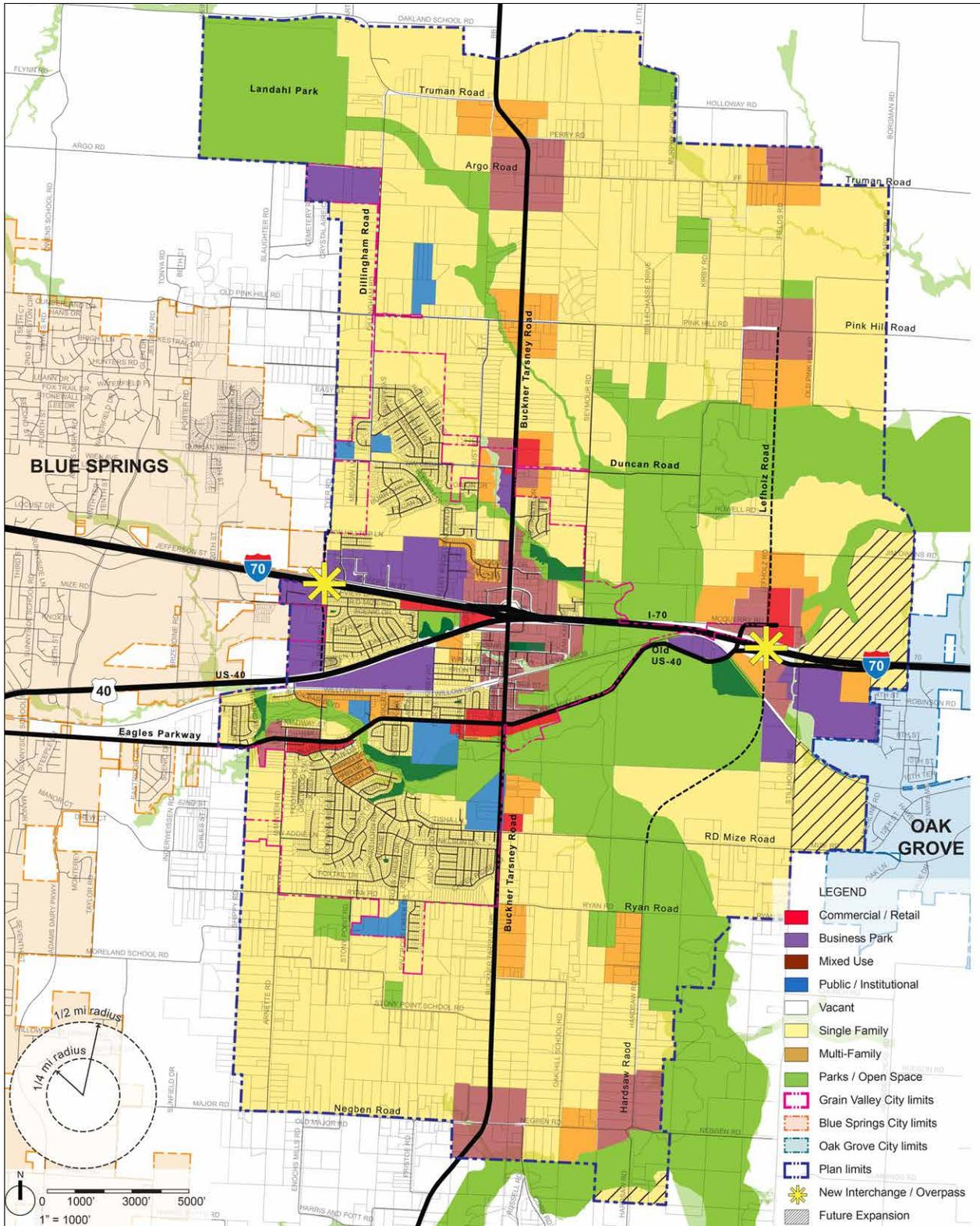
Source: Design Workshop

In addition, the project team conducted a series of focus groups or one-on-one discussions with a number of stakeholders in the community, around the time of the Second Public Open House, in order to gain input concerning the three future land use alternatives. In particular, the project team conducted discussions with representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, key property owners along Main Street, key property owners in the vicinity of the I-70 and Lefholz area, property owners in the vicinity of Buckner Tarsney Road and Duncan Road, and other larger property owners in the rural areas surrounding Grain Valley, to the north and south. In general, interviewees supported the idea of creating a business park to serve Grain Valley, near the potential new I-70 and Lefholz interchange, and the idea of nodes of higher intensity development, located at various key intersections along both Buckner Tarsney Road and Lefholz Road, to the north and south of town. In general, stakeholders supported Future Land Use Alternative Three over the other two alternatives.

# Preferred Land Use Plan

The Preferred Land Use Plan, presented to the public at the Third Public Open House on April 3, 2014, retained the vast majority of the components outlined in the Land Use Alternative Three.

Figure 17: Preferred Land Use Plan



Source: Design Workshop

However, the Preferred Land Use Plan contained a few key changes, compared to Alternative Land Use Option Three.

- The area to the north and west of Buckner Tarsney Road and Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, was changed to “public” from “retail”, to reflect the potential to convert the Sni-A-Bar farm property, as well as adjoining City-owned parcels to the north and west, into a future civic campus (including a potential new community center, various city offices, and recreational facilities).
- The land use designations around Buckner Tarsney and Duncan were changed, as shown, to reflect the wishes of local property owners in the vicinity and to reflect the Focus Area Plan for the Buckner Tarsney and Duncan area (as outlined in an upcoming section of this document).

Similarly, the land use designations for the area south and east of I-70 and Main Street, and around I-70 and Lefholz, were modified slightly to align with the concept plans for these focus areas, as outlined in a separate section.

## Final, Future Land Use Map

Residents of the areas to the south of Ryan Road, in unincorporated Jackson County, expressed their desire to remain rural, at the third and final Public Open House, in April 2014. Although the Preferred Land Use Plan does not call for development to move forward on a particular timetable, in any direction, residents in this area expressed a strong preference to remain as-is, in terms of land use and development, over the next twenty years. Therefore, the Final Future Land Use Map introduces a new land use designation, for Rural Residential, for the areas to the south of Ryan Road. The future land use map continues to include the areas to the south of Ryan Road, however, as doing so will help Grain Valley and the residents in the area articulate their vision for this part of the area to Jackson County authorities, neighboring cities, and to potential land use development applicants in this part of the county.

The Final Land Use Vision Plan depicts land uses distributed geographically throughout the city and areas surrounding the existing city limits of Grain Valley, based on the goals and policies in this document. These land use categories may not necessarily reflect the present use of land within the planning area (including the city and surrounding territories). Instead, in theory they depict the land uses as they could exist in the future. The planning horizon for this document is 2035 (covering the next 20 years). However, the land use map identifies future growth and development beyond what is likely to occur in the next 20 years.

The Final Land Use Vision Plan has two essential roles in future decision-making. First, the Final Land Use Vision Plan graphically portrays public policy for the locations of preferred land use vision and development types. The densities and intensities of use will influence the plan for providing infrastructure and services. Second, the Final Land Use Vision Plan will be used by City staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Aldermen as a guide during review of development requests. Except in very few and exceptional circumstances, rezoning requests that are contrary to, or inconsistent with, the Final Land Use Vision Plan should not be approved until and unless the Planning Commission and the Board of Aldermen adopt amendments to the Final Land Use Vision Plan and/or associated Goals, Policies, and Actions.

## Discussion of the Various Future Land Uses

### *Business Park*

Additional areas of Business Park land uses will help to build the employment base in Grain Valley, and in the process provide a more sustainable jobs to housing balance and a better balance between the property tax base and the sales tax base in the community. Members of the public and various stakeholders strongly supported building a larger base of employment in Grain Valley in order to build the property tax base and to provide a larger pool of jobs for those who would prefer to work closer to home, as opposed to commuting to jobs in the Kansas City metropolitan area or elsewhere.

Business Park uses, as identified in the Comprehensive Plan, may include light industrial uses as well as office, corporate campus, and warehouse uses. Light industrial uses include the manufacturing or packaging of goods. Storage, loading, and work operations within light industrial zones should be screened from view along industrial area boundaries (when adjacent to non-industrial uses), and along all public streets. In addition, the city should require setbacks from industrial uses in order to ensure that these land uses are compatible with adjacent uses. In many cases, industrial parks can be fronted by more aesthetically appealing commercial uses in order to provide a more attractive “front door” to the rest of the city.

While the Final Land Use Vision Plan calls for a sizeable new Business Park near I-70 and Lefholz in order to provide sufficiently large parcels of industrial or business park land necessary to attract larger tenants from elsewhere in the region or the nation, the city should continue in the future to ensure that a sufficient inventory of smaller industrial sites is available for new or existing businesses in the area. Many businesses require much smaller parcels or areas of land to operate, and dedicating at least part of the industrial land inventory within Grain Valley to smaller companies would help in building the overall employment base in the community.

### *Mixed Use*

Mixed use areas provide a built environment that facilitates the ability to live, work and play in one area. These areas should contain convenient pedestrian circulation networks. Over time, these areas should increase in intensity (in terms of density and land use), thereby creating more cost-effective development patterns. Buildings should include a mixture of uses, which are mutually supportive and integrated into the overall community realm. The mix of land uses should accommodate active public uses, such as commercial, retail, and restaurants, on the street level and residential or office uses on upper floors.

## *Residential Land Uses*

General discussion of residential development principles and policies:

- In general, as the City continues to grow, the demographic variety and diversity of future residents is likely to continue to increase. The more variety that exists in the housing stock in Grain Valley in terms of affordability, design, and density, the better suited the City will be to attract a wider variety and a greater number of residents. The community should continue to promote a variety of housing types.
- Future housing growth should enhance the overall quality of development in Grain Valley, adding to the character of the community. The City of Grain Valley should develop in way to preserve the small town character of the community. The City should continue to encourage and guide developers to create high quality housing, designed to enhance the attractiveness of the community. Quality in terms of housing development is typically reflected by the integrity of the design and construction, and the addition of visual improvements such as landscaping and buffering.
- The City should continue to encourage new residential developments to occur in areas that are adjacent to existing development. This policy helps to maximize the efficient use of infrastructure, retain community character, and provide the best overall land use pattern for the City. Growth that occurs directly adjacent to existing developments requires less significant water, sewer, and road extensions and thus reduces the cost of development to the City, compared to residential developments that “leapfrog” existing development patterns and occur in outlying areas, farther from existing limits of development.
- In order to promote the preservation of the “small town character” of Grain Valley, the City should encourage the development of neighborhoods that provide amenities consistent with traditional neighborhood design. These principles include housing that is attractive to passersby and is linked via walkways and bike connections to schools and parks and nearby existing neighborhoods. Well-designed neighborhoods should also include attractive landscaping features such as street trees and various plantings.
- The expansion of residential development in Grain Valley will increase the infrastructure required to maintain a high level of service to residents. The City must determine these costs of service before approval of new residential projects and should ensure, prior to any approvals, that adequate public facilities and services will be available for any new residential growth within the City limits.
- The goals and policies established in this Comprehensive Plan are designed to maintain and improve the quality of the City. The recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan document should be adopted as part of the formal design review process. Doing so will ensure that all future developments are held to the same standards and that the vision of the community is realized through continued residential growth.
- The City should ensure that proposed residential developments include vital neighborhood amenities, including but not limited to sidewalks, parks and open space, access to adjacent neighborhoods, and linkages to the overall community trail system.

### *Single Family Residential*

Despite the focus during the planning effort in increasing the base of employment and business park land uses, residential land uses will continue to dominate the landscape of Grain Valley through 2035. Existing residential areas in Grain Valley will be protected through the continuation of existing zoning to remain in their current state.

Single family residential land uses, for purposes of future planning, may include lower density residential land uses (with densities of 3 to 6 units per acre, in line with existing densities in most neighborhoods in Grain Valley) as well as some areas of medium density single family residential (with densities of 6 to 12 units per acre). Medium density single family areas often include row homes, cottage or patio homes, and some areas of townhomes. Examples of these types of somewhat higher density residential land uses are already present in Grain Valley.

### *Multi-Family Residential*

Multi-family residential land uses may include apartments or higher density residential developments (above 12 units per acre) that may include four-plexes, higher density townhomes or condominiums, or similar residential product. The Final Land Use Vision Plan orients areas of future Multi-Family Residential near areas of Mixed Use development in the area, or near the intersections of major section line roads. These areas represent logical locations for higher density residential development given the connectivity of the adjacent road networks and the clustering of shopping, dining, and employment uses in close proximity to higher density housing options.

### *Commercial / Retail Land Uses*

As the City continues to grow in terms of its residential population base and the base of new businesses (in terms of employment), the community will attract additional retail and commercial land uses. The community should continue to work, through the development and enforcement of design standards and guidelines, to ensure that new retail development in Grain Valley projects a positive image and reinforces the desired community character.

As outlined in the Final Land Use Vision Plan, areas designated for purely retail / commercial (as opposed to Mixed Use areas) include the SW Eagles Parkway corridor, areas near the I-70 and Main Street interchange, areas in the vicinity of Buckner Tarsney Road and Duncan Road, the retail node near the potential new interchange between I-70 and Lefholz Road, and a smaller area of neighborhood retail at the northeast corner of Buckner Tarsney Road and RD Mize Road.

In general, retail and commercial growth in the City should continue to be directed toward nodal development areas surrounding major intersections. This pattern will allow for the community to more clearly articulate urban design goals tailored to particular nodal locations. Examples of urban design guidelines guiding retail development in Grain Valley include the guidelines included in the Main Street Corridor and Adjacent Neighborhoods Plan.

The size and location of commercial developments has a significant impact on the character of the community and all growth should be created in a manner that is both accommodating to and enhancing of the desired “small town” character of Grain Valley.



# 6

## PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Great communities provide residents and visitors with a high quality of life, and as Americans increasingly recognize the various benefits of outdoor recreation and value responsible environmental stewardship of sensitive lands, proactively planning for parks and recreation and open space amenities ranks as one of the top objectives of community planning. The leading towns and suburbs in the Kansas City area and around the country are known for their parks and recreational amenities and programs. Companies increasingly rank communities based upon quality of life factors that include an evaluation of park and recreational assets. As Grain Valley continues to grow quickly over the next two decades, a key goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to outline a framework for parks and recreation planning for the community.

Parks and recreation are an essential element of any healthy and vibrant community, providing environmental, social, and economic value. There are many benefits to providing greater park and open space opportunities, ranging from the pursuit of health and fitness to the desire for self-education, finding a connection with nature, or simply seeking a sense of belonging. Parks and recreation encourage connections between individuals and groups and supports diverse segments of the community by providing spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy.

While this section does not constitute a detailed Parks and Recreation Master Plan, it provides sufficient detail for the City to move forward with park planning and acquisition in general terms over the next several years.

**Table 3: Existing Park Facilities:**

The City of Grain Valley currently includes a total of six developed and four undeveloped park facilities, comprising almost 160 acres of land. The following tables outline the full roster of existing roster of parks and facilities in Grain Valley including the particular amenities in each facility.

Location	Facility Type	Acres or Square Feet	Number and Type of Facilities
<b>Community Center</b> 713 S Main St	Community Center	10,200 SF	Gymnasium Fitness Center Meeting Room Full Service Kitchen Restrooms with Lockers and Showers Office Space
<b>Aquatic Center</b> 713 S Main St	Aquatic Center	6,442 SF	Zero-Depth Entry Tot Slide (2) Tube Slides Diving Board (2) Deck Spray / Splash Features Restrooms with Lockers and Showers Concessions Building Picnic Tables and Loungers
<b>Armstrong Park</b> James Rollo Dr & Main St	Community Park	14 Acres	2 - 5 Year Old Playground (2) Tot Swings 5 - 12 Year old Playground (4) Belt Swings (4) Picnic Shelters Barbeque Grills, Picnic Tables, Benches Gazebo Pavilion w/ Elevated Stages, Men's / Women's Restrooms, Serving Window Skate Park (2) Baseball / Softball Fields Multi-purpose Field (2) Men's / Women's Restrooms Concessions Building Walking Loop Track (Walking / Jogging) (2) Maintenance / Storage Buildings

Location	Facility Type	Acres or Square Feet	Number and Type of Facilities
<b>Monkey Mountain Park</b> 35007 E Old US 40 Highway	Community Park	33 Acres	(4) Baseball / Softball Fields Multi-purpose Field Men's / Women's Restrooms 2 - 5 Year Old Playground (2) Tot Swings 5 - 12 Year old Playground (2) Belt Swings Picnic Shelter  Barbeque Grills, Picnic Tables, Benches Concessions Building Maintenance / Storage Building
<b>Football Field Complex</b> 28605 E Old US 40 Highway	Community Park	15 Acres	(2) Multi-purpose Fields Picnic Shelter Men's / Women's Restrooms Handicap Restroom Concessions Building
<b>Eagle Park</b>  Broadway & Garden	Mini Park	0.5 Acres	Wooden Play Structure  Barbeque Grills, Picnic Tables, Benches
<b>Clover Park</b> Clover & Brome	Mini Park	0.5 Acres	(4) Belt Swings Volleyball Court  Barbeque Grills, Picnic Tables, Benches
<b>Kirby Park</b>  RD Mize & EE Kirby	Mini Park	0.3 Acres	Wooden Play Structure  Barbeque Grills, Picnic Tables, Benches
<b>Farmington Meadows Lake</b> Sandy Ct & Laura Ln	Neighborhood Park	7 Acres	Fishing Lake Non-Motorized Boating
<b>Cross Creek Park</b> Stonebrook & Cross Creek	Community Park	35 Acres	Undeveloped
<b>Graystone</b>	Community Park	25 Acres	Undeveloped
<b>Winding Creeks</b>	Community Park	10 Acres	Undeveloped
<b>40 Highway Retention Pond</b> RD Mize & Long	Community Park	28 Acres	Undeveloped

Location	Facility Type	Acres or Square Feet	Number and Type of Facilities
<b>Prairie Branch Elementary</b> 2300 Dillingham	School		(2) 5 - 12 Year Old Playgrounds Climbing Unit Blacktop with 2 Basketball Courts, 3 Funnel Ball Unit
<b>Matthews Elementary</b> 144 McQuerry Road	School		2 - 5 Year Old Playground with 2 Climbing Units Small Rock Climbing Wall Blacktop with 2 Basketball Courts, 3 Tether Ball Unit
<b>Sni-A-Bar Elementary</b> 701 SW Eagles Parkway	School		(2) 5 - 12 Year Old Playgrounds Small Rock Climbing Wall Blacktop with 2 Basketball Courts, 3 Tether Ball Units, 1 Ball in Basket Unit
<b>Stony Point Elementary</b> 1001 SW Ryan Road	School		5 - 12 Year Old Playground Blacktop with 2 Basketball Goals, 3 Tether Ball Units
<b>Grain Valley Middle School</b> 901 SW Ryan Road	School		Blacktop with 2 Basketball Goals Multi-purpose Field
<b>Grain Valley High School</b> 551 SW Eagles Parkway	School		(2) Multi-purpose Fields (artificial turf & natural grass) Baseball Field Softball Field (4) Tennis Courts

The city classifies the various parks using standards provided by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). This organization classifies parks based upon their size and uses, focusing in particular on the number of people a given park can reasonably serve during a given time period. The following outlines general definitions of Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Mini Parks in a particular community.



*Monkey Mountain Park*  
*Source: Design Workshop*



*Armstrong Park*  
*Source: Design Workshop*

### *Mini Parks:*

- These parks typically include less than one acre and serve residents or employees within a one-quarter mile radius.
- Because having multiple mini parks of very limited acreage increases overall maintenance and coordination costs for a community, most cities tend to not develop very many mini-parks as part of a municipal parks system. In addition, parks of less than three acres generally provide limited services.
- Cities often allow mini-parks (sometimes referred to as “tot lots”) in new developments, but then require developers or a homeowners’ association (as opposed to the city) to maintain these facilities.

### *Neighborhood Parks*

- Neighborhood parks provide recreational and social focus for particular residential areas or sectors within a given community.
- Neighborhood parks provide spaces for informal active and passive activities.
- These parks typically serve residents within one-fourth and one-half mile (within an easy walking distance of a residence).\
- Optimally sized neighborhood parks contain between 5 and 10 acres in order to accommodate needed recreational facilities. However, neighborhood parks may contain up to 20 acres of space.
- The City of Grain Valley currently includes only one park deemed a “Neighborhood Park”. As outlined in the table, the City has a deficiency of parks serving local neighborhoods. Previous comprehensive plans for the City have identified the need to develop additional Neighborhood Parks throughout the community. NRPA standards call for one to two acres of neighborhood parkland per 1,000 residents. Grain Valley currently has seven acres of Neighborhood Parks, which translates into a metric of 0.5 acres per 1,000 residents.

### *Community Parks*

- Community parks typically include diverse uses. They meet community (as opposed to neighborhood) needs and often include areas suited for intense and structured recreational activities (such as baseball, soccer, or softball fields or similar facilities).
- Community parks generally include between 20 and 50 acres and often serve multiple purposes and needs. Some community parks may include as few as 10 acres, depending on their orientation.
- These parks typically serve residents within a one-half to three mile radius, but may also draw visitors from the broader community and even surrounding communities.
- Community parks typically include:
  - An adequate size to accommodate activities associated with neighborhood parks. They also include sufficient space for additional activities.
  - A special attraction that draws people from a larger area, such as a swimming pool, pond, lake, ice rink, trails, special environmental or cultural features, or specialized sports complexes.
- NRPA guidelines call for community park areas to provide for 5 to 8 acres per 1,000 residents. With a total existing acreage of community parks of 160 acres, Grain Valley currently has a surplus of community park space.



Grain Valley Aquatic Center  
Source: Design Workshop

Overall, as of 2012 and based upon the City’s estimated 2012 population, Grain Valley has an overall surplus of park land of 39.8 acres. While the community has an excess of Community Parks, Grain Valley lacks sufficient Neighborhood Parks, to serve particular areas around town.

**Table 4: Parks Analysis**

	NRPA Standards	Existing Total Acreage	Existing Acres per 1,000 Residents	Existing Total Acreage Required per NRPA Standards *	Existing Surplus / (Deficit) Acreage	Projected (2035) Total Acreage Required per NRPA Standards *	Additional Acreage Required to Meet Park Standards in 2035
Neighborhood Parks	1 - 2 Acres / 1,000 Residents	7	1	26	-19	64	57
Community Parks	5 - 8 Acres / 1,000 Residents	160	12	103	57	257	97
Mini & Specialty Parks	N/A	1	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Total Parks and Recreation Area</b>		<b>168</b>		<b>129</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>154</b>
* Assumes 2 Acres / 1,000 residents for Neighborhood Parks and 8 Acres / 1,000 residents for Community Parks							
Grain Valley Population, 2012	12,854						
Grain Valley Projected Population, 2035	32,089						

The following table outlines the comparison of the particular existing park facilities in Grain Valley compared to NRPA standards. For purposes of this analysis, the calculations in the table include the various facilities (including playgrounds, basketball courts, and other school facilities) located at the elementary, middle, and high schools in Grain Valley, with the assumption that residents may use these facilities, at least part of each day.

		NRPA STANDARD (NUMBER PER POPULATION)	EXISTING NUMBER IN GV	REQUIRED PER EXISTING POPULATION	SURPLUS / (DEFICIENCY)	REQUIRED FACILITIES PER 2035 POPULATION	ADDITIONAL FACILITIES NEEDED, 2012 - 2035
Baseball / Softball Fields		1 / 2,000	6	6.4	-0.4	16.0	10.0
Basketball Courts		1 / 5,000	6	2.6	3.4	6.4	0.4
Football Fields		1 / 20,000	1	0.6	0.4	1.6	0.6
Golf Course							
	18-hole	1 / 50,000	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Driving Range	1 / 50,000	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Picnic Shelter		1 / 2,000	2	6.4	-4.4	16.0	14.0
Playgrounds		1 / 2,000	8	6.4	1.6	16.0	8.0
Running Track		1 / 20,000	1	0.6	0.4	1.6	0.6
Soccer Fields *		1 / 10,000	5	1.3	3.7	3.2	-1.8
Swimming Pools		1 / 20,000	1	0.6	0.4	1.6	0.6
Tennis Courts		1 / 2,000	8	6.4	1.6	16.0	8.0
Sand Volleyball Courts		1 / 5,000	1	2.6	-1.6	6.4	5.4

\* For purposes of this analysis, multi-purpose fields in Grain Valley were counted as Soccer Fields.

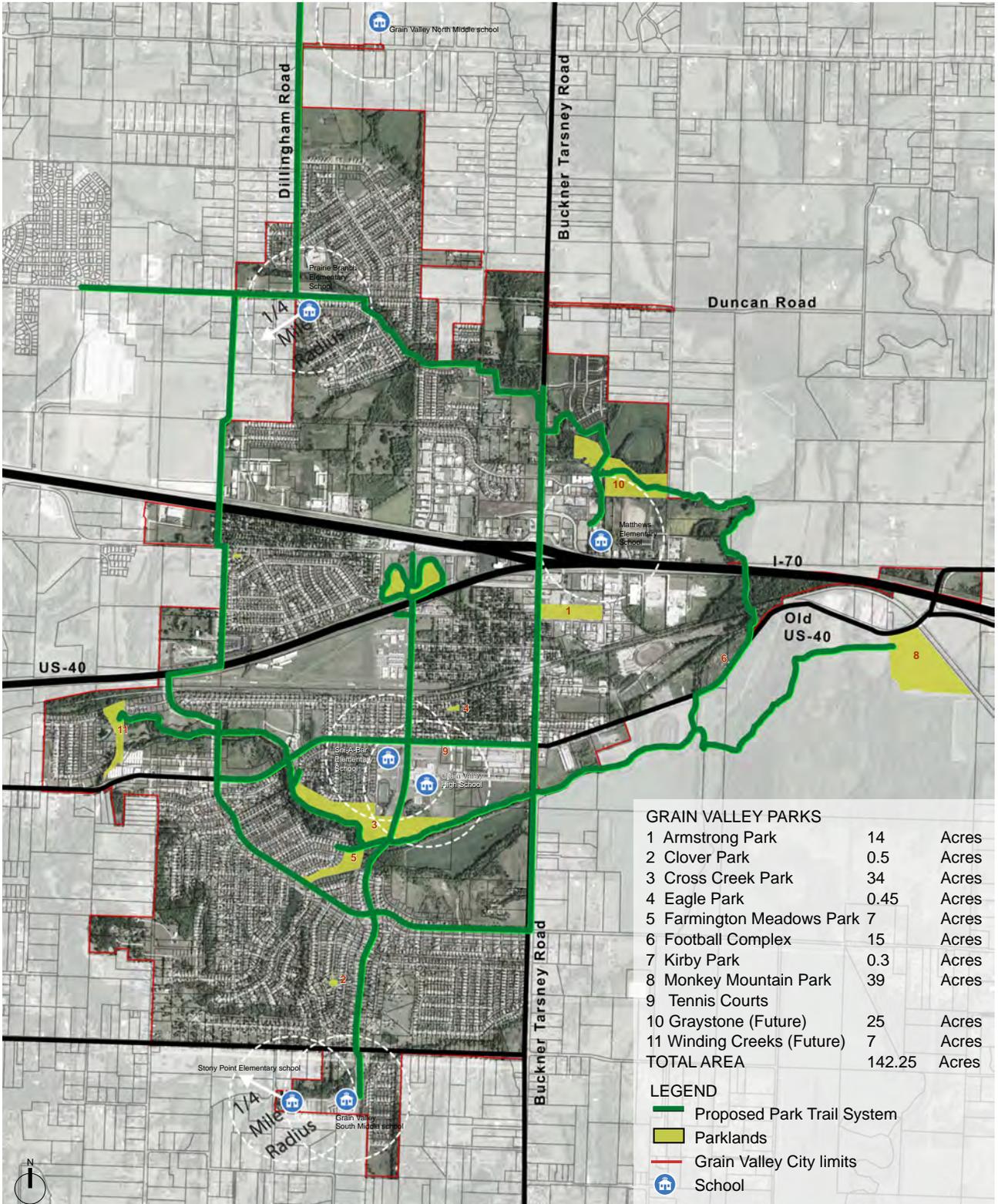
Grain Valley Population, 2012			12,854				
Grain Valley Projected Population, 2035			32,089				

The analysis reveals that the City has sufficient park facilities across all categories, with the exception of picnic shelters and sand volleyball courts. An additional baseball or softball field may also be warranted, given the existing population in the community.

Based upon a 2035 projection of over 32,000 residents, the table outlines the additional number of facilities required in various categories over the next 20 years. The particular demands for various park facilities, of course, depend on the tastes and desires of local residents and activity groups. The community may need to develop additional facilities given the wishes of residents, as Grain Valley continues to grow. For example, many communities have developed soccer facilities far in excess of NRPA standards over the last ten years, given the surge in popularity of soccer at all age levels. While the metrics provided by NRPA do not anticipate a need for a golf course over the next twenty years, Grain Valley may wish to develop a golf course facility to draw visitors to the community from adjoining areas in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

## Geographical Distribution of Parks and Trails

An assessment of the existing parks inventory in Grain Valley also takes into account the geographical distribution of park facilities in the community.



While, overall, the community has sufficient park land to serve the existing population of Grain Valley, a number of newer neighborhoods are not located within walking distance (one fourth mile) of a neighborhood or community park. In particular, the southern portions of the Sni-A-Bar Farms neighborhoods, toward Ryan Road, are located beyond walking distance of parks located near SW Eagles Parkway. Newer neighborhoods located to the west of Duncan Road and Buckner Tarsney Road are similarly located far from existing Grain Valley park facilities. Monkey Mountain Park, located on lands located around 1.5 miles to the east of Main Street, on the edge of the city limits, provides a range of facilities but is not within walking distance of any existing neighborhoods. This park will largely serve new areas of development to the east of the existing Grain Valley city limits.

The existing Trails Plan for Grain Valley outlined a proposed Park Trail System. The plan identified trails primarily along tributaries of the Sni-A-Bar Creek, to the west of the main creek watershed, in the western part of the city (west of Main Street). These creek way trails follow the Sni-A-Bar tributaries just to the south of Cross Creek Park and connect to the east, toward Sni-A-Bar Creek. On the north side of town, a proposed trail would run from around the future site for Graystone Park to the north and west through the Woodbury subdivision. Other primary trails in the previous plan would follow Main Street, Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, Tyer Road, Kirby Drive, and SW Eagles Parkway.

## Future Parks and Open Space Plan

As referenced in the Future Land Use Plan in this document, the Grain Valley community identified the need to provide for significant parks and open space lands in the community over the next 20 years. The following outlines key points of the community's future parks and open space strategy.

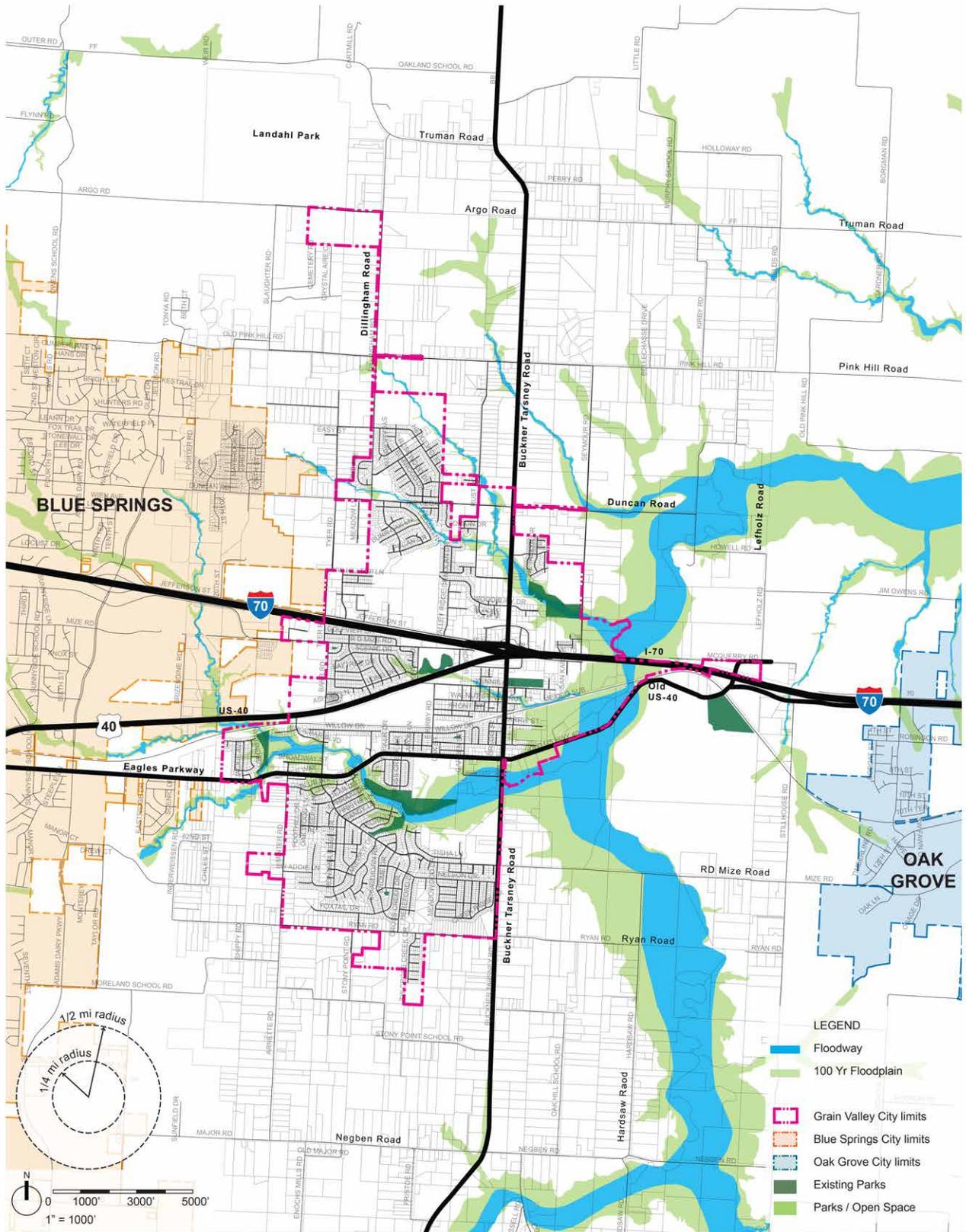
### *Parks and Open Space in Floodplain Areas*

The public supported, during the comprehensive plan process, preserving areas located within 100 year floodplains in Grain Valley as future open space or parks areas. The Sni-A-Bar Creek watershed is a dominant feature in the landscape of eastern Jackson County. It meanders through the central and eastern portions of the future planning area for Grain Valley, to the east of the existing developed areas in the community. The diagram that follows identifies the locations of the 100-year floodplain and the “floodway” in the Grain Valley area.



*View of the Sni-A-Bar Creek floodplain area, looking east from Buckner Tarsney Road, south of Eagles Parkway*  
Source: Design Workshop

Figure 18: Map of Floodplain Areas in City of Grain Valley



Source: Design Workshop

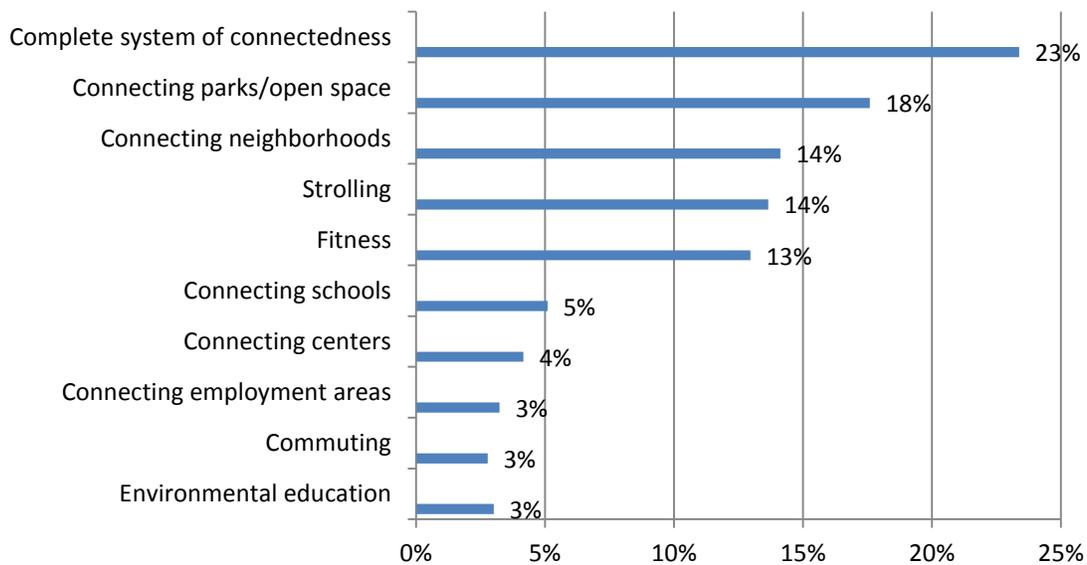
In general, federal regulations allow developments to move forward in areas designated as 100-year floodplain if the elevation of a particular property is raised above the limits of the 100-year floodplain. However, federal regulations make it very difficult to develop in areas that are designated as “floodway” (identified in the dark blue on the map). Floodway areas include the actual creeks or rivers in a particular watershed as well as adjoining acreage that floods more frequently. As illustrated on the map, the area encompassing the Grain Valley planning area (and addressed in this Comprehensive Plan) includes a total of 4,260 acres.

As the city grows to the north, east, and southeast, the Sni-A-Bar Creek area will remain a key focus of planning and development discussions going forward.

Around 85 percent of respondents at the second public meeting for the comprehensive planning effort either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that floodplain areas in the city should be protected from development and used as open space.

Figure 19: Figure 10: Question 7 from Second Public Open House and Online Input

**Q10. What are your top 2 priorities for trails and greenways?**



Source: Design Workshop

During the 1800s and early 1900s, communities around the Kansas City area and the Midwest in general treated river and creek watersheds as areas best used for industrial purposes and various undesirable land uses (including water and wastewater treatment facilities, aggregate plants, etc.). Following repeated major floods along river and creek watersheds in the region in 1903, 1951, and 1993, as well as periodic more minor floods of smaller streams, communities in the Kansas City area began to protect floodplain areas from development. Many communities in the region designate floodplain areas as future park or open space areas, as areas for agricultural-related land uses (such as nurseries, tree farms, orchards, and the like) or simply as areas best designated for continued farm operations. Cities nationwide have embraced waterways as amenities to embrace and market to outsiders. Companies looking to locate in particular communities view amenities such as river or creek-side running paths, soccer and other playing fields, or other park facilities along watersheds as positive quality of life factors, that enhance the marketability of a community to attract employees. From an environmental perspective, preserving floodplain areas as parks or open space helps to solve stormwater runoff and flooding issues from a regional perspective and helps to mitigate and prevent major flood events downstream. The regulations of the US Corps of Engineers place restrictions on development in floodplain zones.

In many cases, developers introduce additional dirt (often referred to as “fill”) in 100-year floodplain areas in order to raise the elevation of particular properties out of the floodplain and make development of various land uses possible. Property owners in Grain Valley may follow this strategy on a case by case basis, but the comprehensive plan of the city encourages city leaders to minimize the use of this practice. Filling in significant areas of the floodplain has the potential to create additional, new floodplain areas downstream, given changes in waterflows resulting from the filling of floodplain areas. From a practical standpoint, the magnitude and size of the floodplain areas along the Sni-A-Bar Creek make significant, large scale filling of floodplain areas along this watershed likely impractical. Furthermore, given that the Sni-A-Bar passes between two potential connection points with I-70 in Grain Valley (at Main Street, and at Lefholz Road), areas near the creek are less ideal for development from a practical, geographical perspective. The community identified preservation of the floodplains in the city as open space as a worthwhile goal, and the plans outlined in this document represent this input from the citizens of Grain Valley.

#### *Potential Parks and Open Space Uses for Floodplain Areas:*

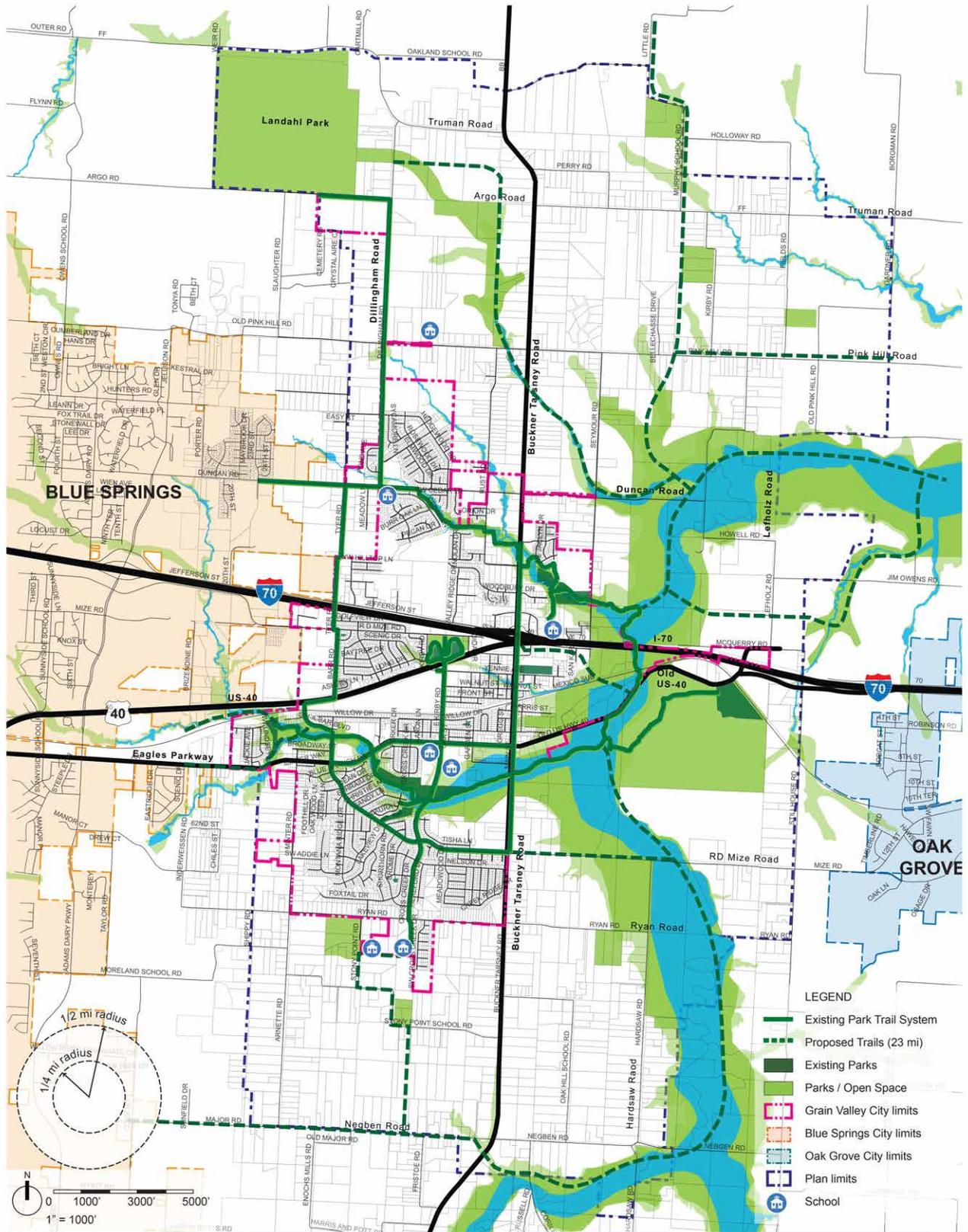
Given the magnitude of the floodplain area (over 4,000 acres) in the Grain Valley area, the Comprehensive Plan does not provide specific concepts or locations for various parks and open space components. The City may elect to complete a more detailed Parks Master Plan going forward, in order to provide specific recommendations for parks and open space components in the various floodplain areas of the community. However, the community should consider the following parks and recreational components, programs, and amenities in planning for the future use of floodplain areas in the future. As noted, a few of the potential uses for the floodplain areas in Grain Valley may constitute a land use other than strictly “parks and open space”, including agricultural tourism and similar land uses that leverage agricultural land uses for commercial purposes.

Steve, the list below includes certain “ag tourism” land uses that aren’t purely “parks and open space”...but it would seem that some of these would be appropriate in the floodplain area. We could either take mention of that kind of stuff out, or we could find an alternative designation for this area, perhaps?

- Golf courses or driving ranges

- Community gardens
- Zip line facilities
- Paintball fields and facilities
- Dog parks
- Soccer fields
- Baseball and softball fields
- Volleyball courts
- Skateboard parks
- Cross country and snowshoeing trails
- Equestrian stables and related facilities
- Hiking and running trails (paved or unpaved)
- Bike trails (for on-road as well as mountain bikes)
- Agricultural heritage facilities and amenities (including petting zoos, pumpkin patches, corn mazes, and U-Pick-It farms)
- Orchards
- Wineries
- Archery facilities
- Rifle facilities, including skeet shooting
- Camping facilities

Planning for Future Trails:  
**Figure 20: Future Land Use Map – Park and Open Space Areas**



Source: Design Workshop

As illustrated in the Trails and Open Space Map and the Future Land Use Map for the Grain Valley, the future parks and open space plan for the community includes the following components:

- The Future Land Use Map retains all areas denoted as “Park and Open Space”, including existing park facilities, as “Park and Open Space” – with the exception of Armstrong Park and the associated ball field and community center facilities to the east and south of Grain Valley City Hall. As discussed elsewhere in this document, this area could represent an area for a potential mixed-use development incorporating park and /or civic space elements. For purposes of the Future Land Use Map, this area (to the east of Main Street and north of James Rollo Drive) is designated as “Mixed-Use”.
- As discussed, all floodplain areas in the Grain Valley area, including Sni-A-Bar Creek and its tributaries, are denoted as Parks and Open Space.
- Landahl Park, operated by Jackson County, is located in the northwest corner of the future planning area for Grain Valley. The Comprehensive Plan incorporates Landahl in the Future Land Use Map, given that residential neighborhoods in northern Grain Valley may eventually develop within walking distance of the park. In addition, given its location within a ten minute drive of most of the area of Grain Valley to the north of I-70, Landahl Park already represents a key park and recreation amenity in Jackson County that serves the Grain Valley area. Landahl includes 1,397 acres, including 21 miles of mountain biking trails, archery and skeet shooting facilities, horseback riding trails, 40 picnic tables and a picnic shelter, camping facilities, and cross country skiing routes.
- The Future Land Use Map and the Trails and Open Space Map identify a select number of additional park areas (designated in green) in undeveloped areas, to the north and south of the existing city limits, in unincorporated Jackson County. The Comprehensive Plan does not mandate that these particular parcels must be developed as Park and Open Space, but instead this feature on the map provides a general geographic designation of the areas in the community that may be suitable for a future park and open space facility. For example, the Future Land Use Map denotes a small parcel (around a quarter section) located between Pink Hill and Truman Roads, and west of Lefholz Road, as a future park and open space area. The exact location of a community park of this size may shift over time, but the Future Land Use Map includes a community park area in this general location to note that this particular part of Grain Valley will likely require a future parks facility.
- The Parks and Open Space Plan expands the projected future trail routes in the Grain Valley area to encompass the overall planning area addressed in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Future extensions of trails in the Grain Valley area show follow Sni-A-Bar Creek to the south and to the east from the heart of Grain Valley, as well as tributaries of Sni-A-Bar Creek and various woodland areas near Grain Valley. The community may elect to outline additional trail alignments, along future arterial corridors, as development moves forward.

## *General Principles and Overall Recommendations for Future Park and Open Space Planning in Grain Valley*

While the Comprehensive Plan does not identify detailed program recommendations for individual parks and open space facilities in Grain Valley, the following outlines some overall recommendations for parks planning in the community over the short term (generally, within the next five to ten years) and long term (10 to 20 years out).

### **Short-term:**

- The City should explore opportunities to construct an additional picnic shelter in the community to serve community and neighborhood functions. As outlined in the analysis, Grain Valley currently lacks sufficient picnic shelter space per NRPA guidelines.
- The City should explore opportunities to acquire land for future neighborhood park space to serve portions of the community that are located more than a half mile from existing neighborhood park space. Therefore, the City may wish to explore areas to the north of the Woodbury development, north of Duncan Road, and to the south of the Sni-A-Bar Farms development, to the south of Ryan Road, to provide additional park space in the future for residents in these respective neighborhoods.
- Based upon the existing conditions analysis, the City should explore opportunities to develop additional sand volleyball courts in an existing or future park, in order to meet or exceed NRPA guidelines.
- The City should complete a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to explore and plan more specifically for future park facilities in Grain Valley. This plan should address planning for aquatic facilities and the potential to develop a new Community Center building, or a second Community Center to supplement the current offerings at the existing Community Center near City Hall.

### **Long Term:**

- Over the long term, as articulated in the Parks Goals and Policies section that follows, the City should work to ensure that its future program of parks and recreation facilities matches the needs of the community's population, based upon NRPA guidelines, and continued input and feedback from residents.

## Park and Recreation Goals

*Goal 1: Grain Valley will have connected open space and a hierarchy of parks that form a complete system in order to serve the community*

**Policy 1.1: Increase the inventory of parks and facilities to exceed present standards and meet future demand.**

- Action 1.1.1: Develop and maintain a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in order to plan for the distribution of parks and open space across the city so that as many residents as possible can access facilities within a one-quarter mile distance from neighborhoods and centers.
- Action 1.1.2: Identify and prioritize parcels that may be suitable for development of parks of all sizes and attributes.
- Action 1.1.3: Review and revise requirements for new developments to achieve the goals established in the Master Plan.

**Policy 1.2: Proactively solicit partnerships and coordinate the provision of parks and recreational programs with other governmental bodies, community organizations, and private entities that exist in the area.**

- Action 1.2.1: Maximize the use of existing facilities in the City owned by the Grain Valley School District, City of Grain Valley, and Jackson County to accommodate recreational programming.
- Action 1.2.2: Evaluate the possibility of partnering with other entities to develop and operate, or contribute to the maintenance of new parks and recreation facilities.

*Goal 2: Grain Valley will have a national caliber of trails that link parks, homes, schools and community facilities across the community to provide multi-modal access throughout the city, to provide safe routes for bicycles and pedestrians to key locations, and to reinforce the existing network of trails.*

**Policy 2.1: Update the trails master plan for Grain Valley in conjunction with the City's Thoroughfare Plan, allowing for all modes of accessibility.**

- Action 2.1.1: Maintain a long-range trail system plan that connects into the regional trail system network (Metrogreen).
- Action 2.1.2: Integrate the trail network with the city-wide pedestrian and bicycle circulation network.
- Action 2.1.3: Develop programming along a greater number of trails for recreational and educational purposes.

**Policy 2.2: Locate parks, schools, and community facilities in locations accessible via the trail network.**

- Action 2.2.1: Utilize the trails system plan to require incorporation of trails into the plats and site plans of suitable facilities.
- Action 2.2.2: Encourage the location of future parks, schools, community facilities, and public buildings in areas that have accessible trails.

*Goal 3: Parks and Recreation facilities and programs will continue to meet current level-of-service standards and evolve as the community's recreational needs change.*

***Policy 3.1: Study the feasibility of, and design future facilities to meet, the identified recreational needs of the community over time.***

- Action 3.1.1: Conduct feasibility studies as needed for future recreation centers and aquatic centers in Grain Valley.
- Action 3.1.2: Develop individual park concept plans for new community and regional parks to determine the amenities included to fulfill identified needs.

***Policy 3.2: Expand existing programs and respond to the changing demand for new recreational programs.***

- Action 3.2.1: Introduce new programs and facilities to meet the changing demographics and interests of the community.

*Goal 4: Grain Valley will preserve and protect environmental quality and reinforce the heritage and identity of the community.*

***Policy 4.1: Preserve the existing urban forest and manage the conversion of forested lands in the community.***

- Action 4.1.1: Develop and maintain a long range Urban Forestry Plan to ensure the continuity and establishment of the urban forest.
- Action 4.1.2: Continue to provide opportunities to educate the public about the value of the urban forest.
- Action 4.2.2: Pursue certification of Grain Valley as a "Tree City USA"

*Goal 5: Parks and facilities will attain high levels of quality in design and maintenance*

***Policy 5.1: All parks will be accessible and safe for people with all types of physical abilities.***

- Action 5.1.1: Ensure all new and existing facilities meet the most current accessibility and safety requirements.
- Action 5.1.2: Identify existing facilities to be revised to most current standards.

***Policy 5.2: Incorporate features that promote cultural heritage and a high quality of life into all new park and recreation projects.***

- Action 5.2.1: Encourage the incorporation of public art in all new facilities, appropriate to the type of use and location.
- Action 5.2.2: Incorporate design concepts into the construction of new facilities that will allow for the long term sustainability of the project.

***Policy 5.3: Renovate and better maintain existing parks to increase patronage.***

- Action 5.3.1: Enhance and revitalize existing parks so that they are better utilized by the public they are serving.

*Goal 6: The operations of parks, recreation, and open space will increase awareness of existing programs and ensure the appropriateness of new facilities to the community.*

***Policy 6.1: Expand range of promotional materials and the number of outlets where residents and visitors can obtain it.***

- Action 6.1.1: Develop and review an annual marketing plan that indicates where, when, and how the Parks and Recreation Department distributes information throughout the community.

***Policy 6.2: Continue to gather and implement feedback on recreational programming to meet the needs of the community.***

- Action 6.2.1: Conduct an annual City-wide parks and recreation user survey.
- Action 6.2.2: Conduct regular focused survey of target groups, such as teens, sports leagues, seniors, and families.



# 7

## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

This section contains general recommendations for how new development areas should proceed in Grain Valley in terms of the orientation of different land uses or “centers”. It also provides a variety of “concept plans” for four specific focus areas in the community that will help guide development going forward.

## Concept Plans for Four Focus Areas

The comprehensive plan outlines suggested Concept Plans for four general sub-areas within Grain Valley. These plans identify ideas, in terms of future road and street networks and building footprints, that the community may use going forward to guide or stimulate development or redevelopment at the four focus area locations. The concept plans are not intended to represent a fixed plan for future development in these locations, but reflect general principles and themes for future development that the community has articulated as part of the overall comprehensive planning process. Developers or land owners wishing to gain approval for particular site plans or development strategies going forward should consult with these concept plans before moving forward, in order to ensure that their vision for a particular area aligns with the vision of the community. The four focus areas are as follows:

- I-70 and Lefholz Road: The area around a potential future interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, in eastern Grain Valley (hereinafter referred to as “I-70 and Lefholz Road”)
- Duncan and Buckner Tarsney: The area within a half mile of the Duncan Road and Buckner-Tarsney Road intersection (hereinafter referred to as “Duncan and Buckner Tarsney”)
- Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney: The area within a half mile of the Sni-A-Bar Boulevard / RD Mize Road and Buckner Tarsney Road intersection (hereinafter referred to as “Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney”)
- Downtown Area: The area along and east of Main Street, from I-70 south to around the Kansas City Southern railroad tracks (including the area commonly known as Downtown Grain Valley today, and hereinafter referred to as the “Downtown Area”)

### *I-70 and Lefholz Road Concept Plan*

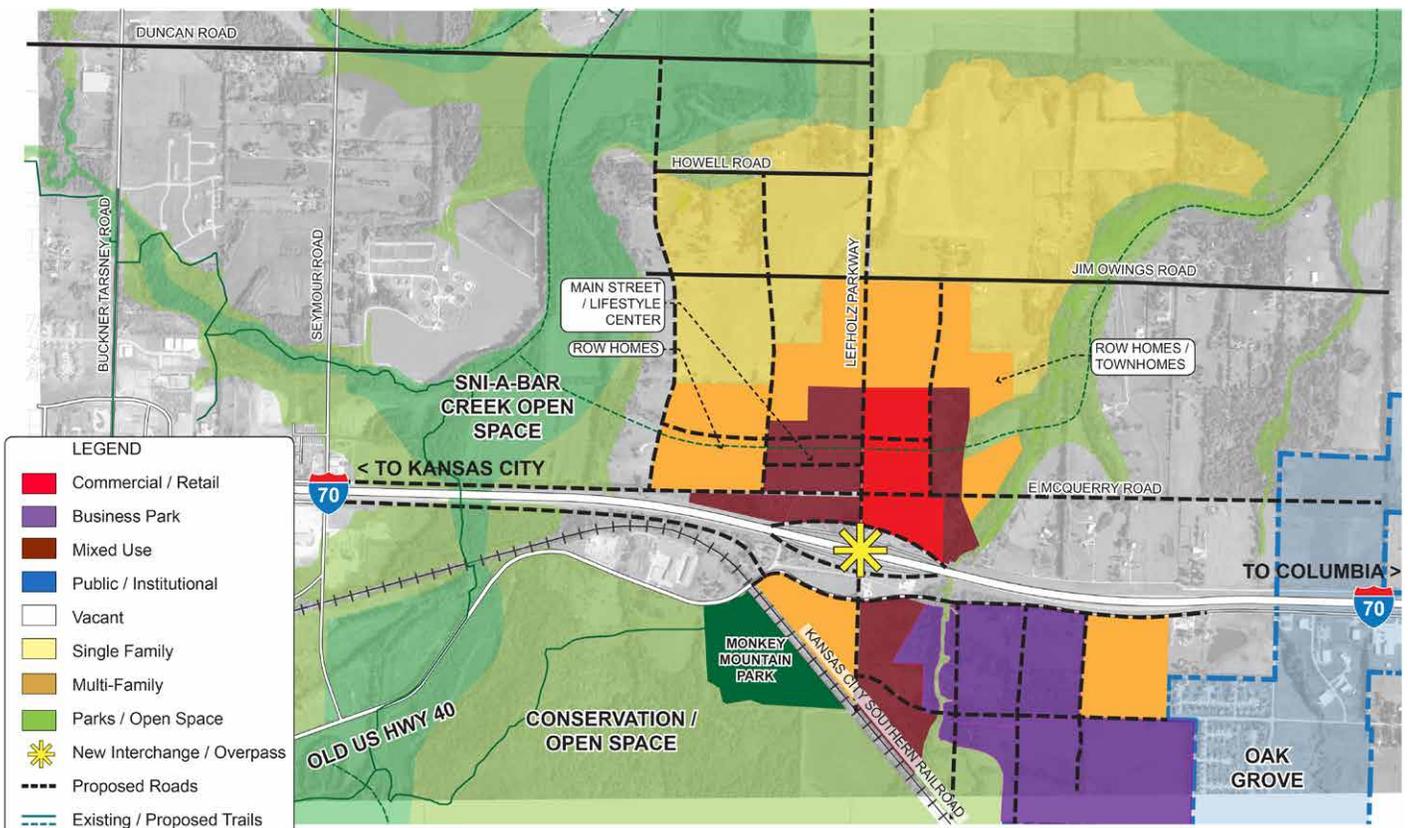
The Future Transportation Plan for Grain Valley identifies a new interchange on I-70 and Lefholz as a key goal for the City, along with working over time to develop a new north-south arterial along the Lefholz Road alignment to serve and promote development in the eastern portion of the community. In turn, this focus area conceptual plan outlines a vision for future land uses and development character for the areas surrounding this key interchange / intersection over the next few decades.

The concept plan for I-70 and Lefholz, in line with feedback from the community at the second and third public open houses, identifies the area south and east of the future interchange as an area for one or more larger business park or industrial park developments. Development in this area would be able to take advantage of access to both I-70, and the Kansas City Southern railway, and future business park or industrial clients could construct spur lines connecting their from their properties and operations to the KCS mainline. The area just to the south of the I-70 interchange would include an area of “mixed-use” development, including a combination of office / business park, retail, and residential land uses, to serve the business park area. Companies around the country are increasingly seeking business park or office park developments that integrate and include a variety of places to eat, conduct day to day services (such as dry cleaning or banking), and residential living options, for employees who wish to live in close adjacency to where they work. Many business parks around the country today are in general moving to more of a mixed-use orientation

and include many of the overall community planning concepts discussed in this document, including the provision of walking / running trails for employees, enhanced landscaping and aesthetics to attract and retain companies and their employees, and the integration of retail and restaurants in close proximity to office and business park uses.

The concept plan for the I-70 and Lefholz area does not specify the kind of tenants or overall flavor of the “business park” area to the southeast of the intersection. The size of the business park area provides economic development and City officials in Grain Valley, along with state economic development agencies, to identify a variety of uses for the property, given its pivotal location along I-70 between Kansas City and St Louis. The area could develop with a single large user, such as a larger manufacturing plant, or as a series of small to mid-size business park users, including companies with operations buildings and associated corporate offices. One of the key takeaways of this concept plan is that, regardless of the tenant or companies attracted to the area, the site plans for various projects should include sufficient landscaping and buffering, and amenities such as sidewalks / walking trails in order to create a higher quality image for the area. With the completion of a new interchange at I-70 and given the area’s access to the Kansas City metropolitan area and its strong transportation and distribution networks, this area of Grain Valley should rank very highly for site selectors scanning the Kansas and Missouri markets for expansion opportunities for companies. Assuming that Grain Valley and the State of Missouri bring the appropriate resources and tools to the table in attracting companies to this area (see the Economic Development section of this document), the community should be able to work with a pro-

Figure 21: I-70 and Lefholz Road Concept Plan



Source: Design Workshop

To the southwest of the I-70 intersection, the concept plan depicts the eventual extension of the South Outer Road from the areas near Main Street, east across the Sni-A-Bar Creek basin to a connection with Old US 40 Highway. As discussed elsewhere in the document, the South Outer Road connection would help to promote commercial development along the south side of I-70, and would provide an alternative to Old US 40 Highway for traffic moving east-west, from the Lefholz area toward the heart of the Grain Valley community.

To the north of I-70, the concept plan envisions the development of a larger scale retail area, including potential big box stores (such as Target, Lowe's, Home Depot, etc.), larger format regional draws (such as a Gander Mountain, Cabela's, etc.) and junior box retail (including stores such as Bed Bath and Beyond, Staples, Office Depot, Michael's, and many more), along the east side of Lefholz Road. To the west, the plan envisions the creation of a Main Street-themed or "lifestyle" suburban mixed-use development, in which restaurants and other in-line stores would orient around a more walkable "Main Street" area that would orient perpendicular from the Lefholz Road corridor. On parcels located farther from the Main Street, to the north and south, the concept plan envisions additional "mixed-use" development, including a combination of retail, office, and residential living options (including apartments, row homes, townhomes, condominiums, and higher density single family residential units). The area to the north of I-70 and Lefholz features generally level ground and is therefore suitable for larger format retail and a variety of mixed-use development.

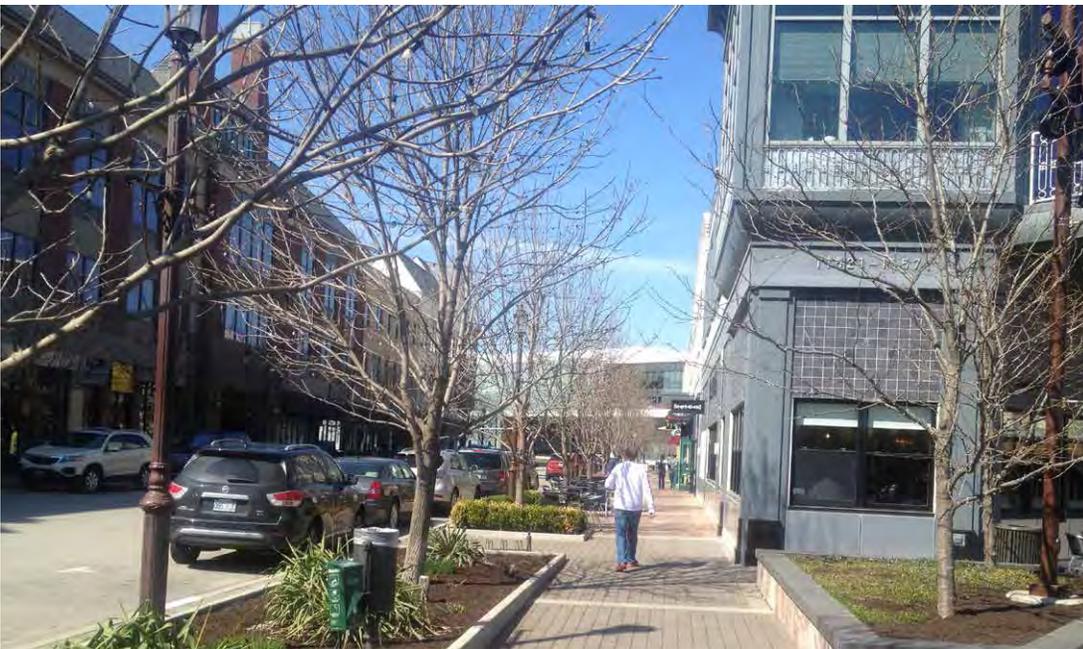


*View Looking North from I-70 and Lefholz Area  
Source: Design Workshop*

Grain Valley leaders should work with developers of the area around I-70 and Lefholz Road to create a theme and feel for the mixed-use development, to the north and west of the intersection, that is distinctive and reflects the character of the community. While the community should work to create a unique feel for this area, the "Main Street" or lifestyle retail area could resemble, to some extent, other mixed-use developments in the Kansas City region that have gained some degree of success over the last ten years, including the Zona Rosa development in Kansas City North and the Park Place development in Leawood, Kansas.



*Precedent Development: Zona Rosa, Kansas City North  
Source: Design Workshop*



*Precedent Development: Park Place, Leawood, Kansas  
Source: Design Workshop*

To the north of the “Main Street” area, the area on either side of the Lefholz Road corridor would transition into multi-family residential and single-family residential uses, toward the Sni-A-Bar Creek area that runs to the west and north of this part of Grain Valley.

### *Park and Open Space Considerations – I-70 and Lefholz Concept Plan*

The concept plan for the I-70 and Lefholz area depicts how this part of Grain Valley would develop, in general terms, with park and open space amenities. The diagram shows a series of park and open space trail connections that would link from the significant areas of park and open space, along Sni-A-Bar Creek and within the park lands around Monkey Mountain Park and to the south, with the development areas to the east. The residential developments that flank the I-70 and Lefholz area should develop in order to take advantage of the adjacency to the open space resources of the Sni-A-Bar Creek area.

In addition, although not depicted explicitly on the I-70 and Lefholz concept plan diagram, the residential and mixed-use areas to the north of I-70, as well as the business park areas to the southeast, should include smaller neighborhood or pocket parks to serve particular local neighborhoods and districts in the area. The Park and Open Space chapter of this Comprehensive Plan discusses park and open space planning for future areas within Grain Valley in greater detail.

### *Public Support for I-70 and Lefholz Concept Plan*

Members of the public, at the third Public Open House and in the online version of the keypad polling survey presented at the meeting, generally favored the I-70 and Lefholz Concept Plan. A combined 48 percent of respondents on-line or in-person either “strongly favored” or “favored” the concept plan as depicted. Around 8 percent of respondents, however, indicated that they were unsure and would like to learn more about the plan, indicating that the City may need to conduct further public outreach and education concerning the I-70 and Lefholz plan as the community moves forward and development applications begin to take shape for this part of Grain Valley. Stakeholders interviewed during the project, including the key property owner in the Lefholz Road area (Ward Development) generally favored the concept plan as depicted in the public meetings.

### *Duncan and Buckner-Tarsney Concept Plan*

The area around Duncan Road and Buckner Tarsney is currently located on the northern fringes of development in Grain Valley, and this area represents the most likely intersection area to develop going forward along the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor going forward, following the completion of various developments just to the north of the interchange between I-70 and Buckner Tarsney Road. This concept plan does not represent a fixed plan for development in this area, but the concepts depicted in the plan provide a guide and vision of the community for how this key gateway into Grain Valley, from the north, should develop over the next few decades. This concept plan may also serve as an example for how development may move forward at other key intersections along Buckner Tarsney, or other arterials, to the north and south of Grain Valley in the future.

The area around Duncan and Buckner Tarsney currently includes the corporate headquarters for Meravic Corporation (including a headquarters building and loading facilities, to the rear of the building) on the southwest corner of the intersection. The northwest corner includes a small rental house, and otherwise vacant and vegetated property. The northeast corner includes a rental house and a larger farm field (of soybeans and other typical Mid-western row crops). The southeast quadrant includes two single-family houses that are 40 to 50 years old, each, as well as farm fields with row crops to the east of these houses. A floodplain area associated with a tributary of Sni-A-Bar Creek runs northwest-to-southeast, about one-quarter of a mile to the northeast of the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney intersection. Another smaller tributary of Sni-A-Bar Creek runs generally north-south, through the middle of the northwest quadrant, and then continuing to the south, just to the west of the Meravic property.

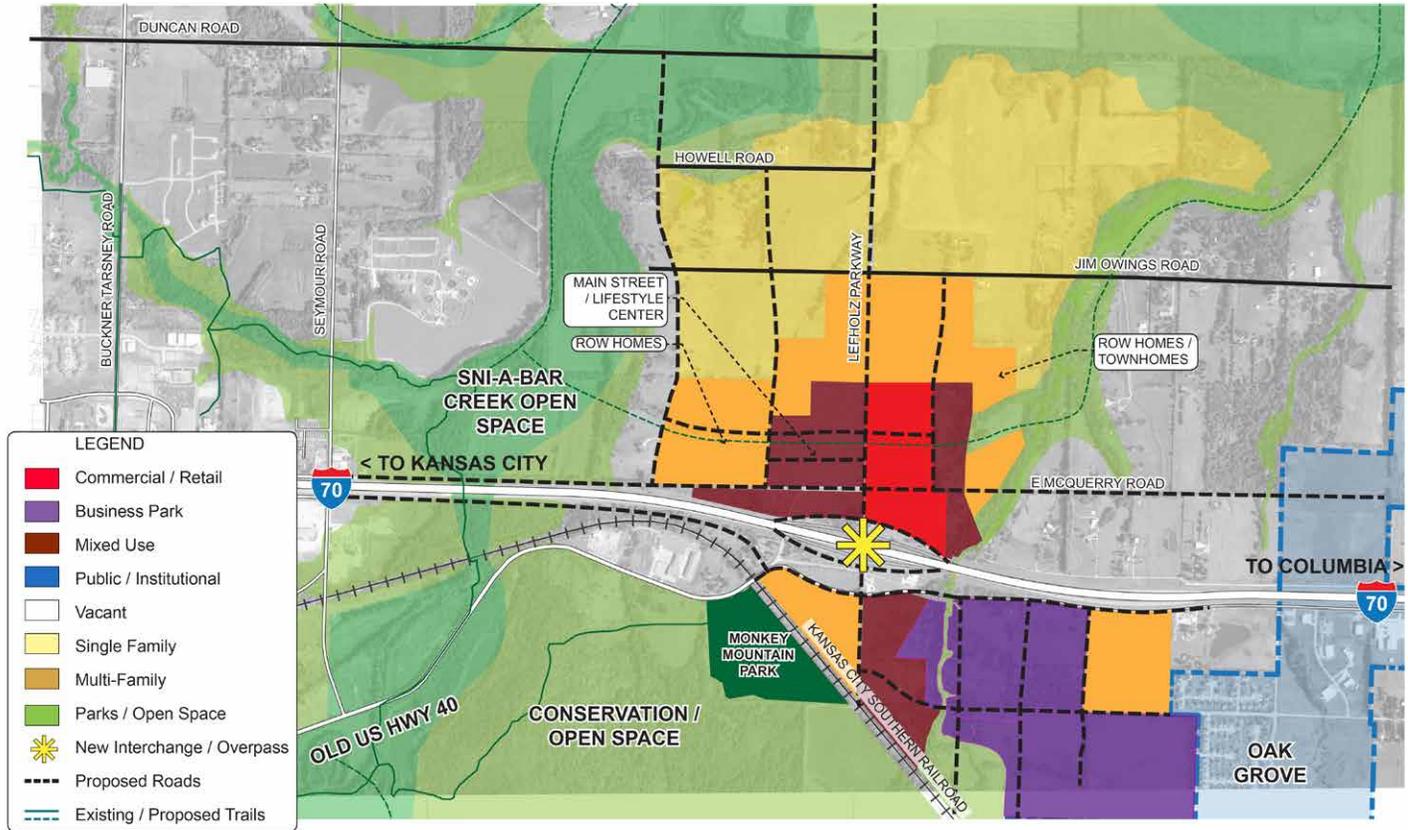


*View of area to north and east of Buckner-Tarsney and Duncan Road*  
*Source: Design Workshop*

The southwest quadrant of the intersection area (with the exception of one single-family parcel along Buckner Tarsney) and most of the northwest quadrant are located within the current city limits of Grain Valley. The northeast and southeast quadrants are currently located in unincorporated Jackson County.

The overall area analyzed and depicted as part of the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney concept plan encompasses 129 acres. The concept plan outlines future development strategies for the area that is generally within walking distance (one-quarter mile) of the Buckner and Duncan intersection.

Figure 22: Duncan and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan



Source: Design Workshop

Key Concepts – Duncan and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan

- The plan assumes, based upon conversations with officials from Meravic Corporation, that the existing headquarters and complex for Meravic will remain for at least the next 20 to 30 years. Therefore, the concept plan depicts the area around Meravic and to the south retaining a “business park” land use designation and shows two business park buildings along the west side of Buckner Tarsney (including the existing Meravic building, as well as a potential new business park facility to the south).
- The Meravic Corporation owns the parcel that has direct access on the southwest corner of Duncan and Buckner Tarsney and envisions this smaller area to the north of their building to develop as convenience retail or similar commercial use (such as a bank building, a convenience store, or similar use) that would take advantage of the direct adjacency and visibility to the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney intersection.
- The plan calls for the northwest and southeast quadrants of the intersection to develop as “mixed-use” areas, with a combination of retail, office, and residential land uses. These areas could develop with two story buildings, with either retail or office on the ground floor, and office or residential uses on second or third stories.
- The northeast corner of Buckner Tarsney and Duncan Road appears to have the most viable setting for a larger scale retail commercial development, of the four quadrants surrounding the intersection. This property is fairly level in topography and has good visibility from all directions. Accordingly, the concept plan calls for the development of

somewhat larger format retail buildings in this area. The plan depicts two larger, one story retail buildings somewhat removed from the intersection. A small neighborhood grocery or another neighborhood serving retailer (such as a Walgreen's or a CVS) would be a great fit for this corner of the intersection. The plan depicts a few smaller retail "pad" sites that could accommodate a few small eateries or smaller retail stores along the frontage of Buckner Tarsney and Duncan.

- In line with the recommendations of the Parks and Recreation component of the Comprehensive Plan, the concept plan for Duncan and Buckner Tarsney calls for the area along the creek tributary, around halfway between Buckner Tarsney and Rust Road, to remain undeveloped and serve as an open space amenity for the surrounding developments. This creek corridor could include trails along the creek as well as trails or walkways that would connect to the adjacent developments to the east and west, to enhance the attractiveness and marketability of these properties.
- The area to the west of the creek tributary and south of Duncan Road would develop as a multi-family or higher density development, with apartments, townhomes or single-family attached residential units. Similarly, the area to the north and east of Duncan Road and Rust Road, and the outlying parts of the parcels on the northeast and southeast quadrants of the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney intersection, would develop as similar multi-family or higher density single family attached products. Assuming that lower density residential neighborhoods would develop farther away from the Buckner Tarsney Road corridor, to the east and west, this orientation makes sense from a planning perspective. Somewhat higher density residential projects normally orient around "neighborhood centers" such as the area around Duncan and Buckner Tarsney, in order to take advantage of adjacency and connectivity to places to shop and eat, and to take advantage of adjacency to a key arterial (such as Buckner Tarsney) and access to the overall city.

#### *Urban Design Component of Duncan and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan*

- The concept plan for the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney area includes the following key urban design characteristics that the city will follow going forward, to guide new development in the area:
- On all four quadrants of the intersection, the City will guide developers to create site plans that orient buildings up to the street level. This orientation creates a more attractive "front door" to the Duncan Road and Buckner Tarsney corridors and runs counter to the typical pattern in suburban America, in which buildings orient to the rear of parcels and include a large area of parking in front. The traditional suburban model creates a more scattered feel to developments and creates a less attractive look along streets in a given district. Orienting buildings up to the street right of way, and placing parking areas either to the rear or side of buildings, would help to create a more attractive streetscape along both Buckner Tarsney and Duncan Road.



*Example of Buildings Oriented to the Street in a Suburban Setting  
135th and Metcalf area, Overland Park, Kansas  
Source: Design Workshop*

As depicted in the diagram, the concept plan for Duncan and Buckner Tarsney includes street connections between different land use components in the general area. For example, street connections between the residential areas to the east side of Buckner Tarsney and the mixed-use or retail areas along the main street would allow for easier access for residents to places to eat, shop, or conduct business and would make the entire area feel better integrated and developed as a true district or place. This pattern runs counter to the typical suburban model in which land uses located behind retail shopping centers are often completely disconnected from retail shopping areas (either through fencing, or the lack of any parking lot or street connections). The typical suburban model creates inefficient patterns in which residents must, for example, drive or walk several blocks out of their way to travel from their homes to a nearby grocery or restaurant. Overall, the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney plan calls for development to follow a “grid” pattern, in which east-west and north-south streets would better connect all four quadrants of the intersection area. The grid of streets would include sidewalks and other accommodations for people walking and biking. The grid should also connect, where possible, with other areas of development in Grain Valley in all directions emanating from the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney area. For example, the grid of streets in the multi-family area in the southeast quadrant should connect with Jaclyn Drive, which continues to the south of the concept plan area.

The concept plan calls for park and open space connections throughout the area, and connecting to creek greenways located in the general vicinity. For example, the plan shows an open space corridor (with trees and a walking trail) around the northeast and southeast quadrants of the Duncan Road intersection. These areas, likewise, would have sidewalk or open space trail connections stretching to the east, toward the floodplain corridor that flanks the tributary to Sni-A-Bar Creek. Similarly, the development areas to the west of Buckner Tarsney should include sidewalk or trail connections to the creek greenway that runs north-south, behind Meravic Corporation, as well as to adjoining neighborhoods in the area.

As outlined in other sections of the Comprehensive Plan, development in the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney area should coordinate with plans by the city to develop the main arterials (Duncan, and Buckner Tarsney) as attractive streets in the city. Plans for the grid of neighborhood streets in the concept area should likewise follow conventions established for Main Streets, or neighborhoods streets, in Grain Valley.

### *Public Support for Duncan and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan*

Members of the public, at the third Public Open House and in the online version of the keypad polling survey presented at the meeting, generally favored the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan. A combined 54 percent of respondents on-line or in-person either “strongly favored” or “favored” the concept plan as depicted. Stakeholders interviewed during the project, including the key property owners immediately surrounding the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney intersection, generally favored the concept plan as depicted in the public meetings.

### Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan

The City of Grain Valley currently owns several parcels flanking the north and west sides of the Sni-A-Bar farm property, on the northwest quadrant of the Sni-A-Bar Boulevard and Buckner Tarsney Road intersection, toward the south end of Grain Valley. The City is currently negotiating to acquire the Sni-A-Bar farm property as well. Given the potential to develop a variety of civic uses in and around the Nelson farm and the importance of this intersection to the future growth of southern part of the community, the City elected to complete a Concept Plan for this area as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Sni-A-Bar farm represents the only current land use on the northwest quadrant of the intersection. A series of single family homes, with surrounding acreage, cover the east side of Buckner Tarsney Road, across from and to the north of the Nelson farmhouse, as well as along RD Mize Road, to the east of the Buckner Tarsney intersection. The southeast quadrant, similarly, includes larger lot single family homesteads. The southwest quadrant of the intersection is fully developed with single family residential land uses, as part of the Sni-A-Bar Farms development. A vacant parcel on the northeast corner of Sni-A-Bar / RD Mize and Buckner Tarsney is currently on the real estate market as a potential retail or commercial property.

A large floodplain area exists to the north and east of the concept plan area, along Sni-A-Bar Creek and a tributary that flows into the creek from the west. A floodplain area also follows the tributary to the west, to the north of the Nelson farm and south of the shopping center near SW Eagles Parkway and Buckner Tarsney Road.

The Sni-A-Bar farm is a historically significant farm property, including a farmhouse that dates to 1913 and has undergone a series of expansions over many years. Today the farmhouse is a sprawling complex with multiple bedrooms and several living and banquet areas. The farm complex also includes a series of farm outbuildings.



*Entrance to Nelson Farm property, from Buckner-Tarsney Road  
Source: Design Workshop*

William Rockhill Nelson, the famous publisher of the *Kansas City Star*, a noted real estate developer in Kansas City, and the benefactor of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, acquired more than 2,400 acres in the early 20th century for the establishment of Sni-A-Bar Farm. The farm's mission was the development of improved breeding methods and livestock, and it served as one of the world's leaders in animal health for more than 30 years. Following Nelson's death, three regional universities (the University of Missouri – Columbia, the University of Kansas, and the University of Oklahoma) used the farm for experiments and studies. By mid-century the farm began to be sold off in pieces, and eventually most of the farm was developed into the present-day Sni-A-Bar Farms residential neighborhood in the southern part of Grain Valley.

The concept plan for the Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney area calls for a municipal or civic complex on the northwest quadrant of the intersection, with the assumption that the City will acquire the Sni-A-Bar farm property. The existing Community Center facility, located to the east of the Grain Valley City Hall, is currently operating at capacity, and residents and City staff noted during the initial stages of the Comprehensive Plan effort that the swimming pool facility, in particular, is overcrowded during the summer. As the community grows, Grain Valley will likely require a larger Community Center with recreational facilities to serve the growing population. The City views the Sni-A-Bar farm area as a potential site for a combination of civic uses, including the following potential components:

- A new Community Center, including gymnasium facilities and training rooms
- A new Aquatic Center, including indoor as well as outdoor pools and wading areas, for residents of all ages
- Meeting facilities for community groups and City meetings
- A potential site for a new and expanded Grain Valley City Hall, over time, as the community grows

- Potential space for a university campus, toward the western end of the property. Grain Valley officials note that this campus could include space for a satellite branch of a community college or local university, or space for University-related research, given the generally good access from this part of Grain Valley to I-70 and the eastern suburban region of Kansas City.
- The picturesque meadow on the northwest corner of Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney would be preserved as a nature education area for future generations, and could also be used for community gardens for the Grain Valley community.



Figure 23: Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan  
 Source: Design Workshop

At the third public open house and in an online version of keypad polling questions presented at the meeting, the public supported the concept of developing a community center in the Sni-A-Bar farm area. Specifically, a total of 48 percent indicated that they either strongly supported or at least supported the idea of relocating the Grain Valley Community Center from its current location to facilitate expansion and provide space for development north of downtown.

Respondents at the third public open house and an online version of the meeting’s keypad polling questions favored, in particular, including a new community center, a senior center, a library, and a heritage center in a new municipal complex around the Sni-A-Bar farm.

To the east of Buckner Tarsney Road, the concept plan calls for the following land uses:

- A small retail shopping center on the northeast corner of RD Mize and Buckner Tarsney
- A mixture of single family detached and multi-family units on areas farther to the north and east of the RD Mize and Buckner Tarsney intersection. Importantly, this area would likely develop over the longer term and only as existing residents living in this area decide to move forward with any plans for redevelopment of their properties.

Similar to the themes outlined in the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney concept plan, the plan for this area also calls for park and open space connections from the future residential area east of Buckner Tarsney and the park and open space areas to the east, in the Sni-A-Bar Creek floodplain, to the retail shopping center, and to the Sni-A-Bar farm civic center to the west. The community center and other facilities on the site of the Sni-A-Bar farm would similarly have connections via sidewalk or trail to the floodplain and park / open space area to the north and to surrounding neighborhoods to the east.

The Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney plan also calls for street connections from the retail shopping center to the residential areas to the north in order to provide for better connections and biking and walking facilities between these surrounding neighborhoods and shopping and retail opportunities closer to the intersection.

The plan could be advanced through iterations to include a pedestrian mall that would connect the educational campus on the west side of the focus area with the civic facilities (City Hall, aquatic center, etc.) and the heart of the Nelson farm area. Plans for the educational campus would ideally locate buildings together in order to enhance pedestrian connections and a sense of place, as opposed to a design that would include a large number of surface parking areas, separating building areas. In addition, the layout for the residential areas east of Buckner-Tarsney could include more of a “grid” layout in terms of streets in order to further enhance connectivity and walkability in this portion of the focus area.

#### Public Support for Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan

Members of the public, at the third Public Open House and in the online version of the keypad polling survey presented at the meeting, generally favored the Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney Concept Plan. A combined 50 percent of respondents on-line or in-person either “strongly favored” or “favored” the concept plan as depicted.

### Downtown Area Concept Plan

For years, Grain Valley residents and business owners along Main Street have dreamed of creating an enhanced Downtown district for the community, to serve as a true “heart” for the growing city and to help entice visitors and new residents to Grain Valley. Several years ago the City passed a Downtown Overlay District ordinance to help guide redevelopment efforts along Main Street, and the City has had discussions of ways to provide for municipal parking facilities near the Main Street shops.

During the course of the Comprehensive Plan process, community leaders and downtown businesses discussed the concept of using City-owned lands near Main Street and the I-70 interchange to promote development in the area. Discussions with various parties revealed that one of the shortcomings of the existing group of buildings along Main Street is that the area lacked a critical mass of shops and businesses to constitute a notable “downtown” district, in the traditional sense. Various stakeholders interviewed as part of the planning

effort noted that, by developing city-owned lands along and east of Main Street, the community could take advantage of the access to I-70 and the recent interchange improvements to increase retail sales, and the sales tax base, and bring more business activity toward the downtown heart of Grain Valley.



*Looking South Along Main Street, June 2014*  
Source: Design Workshop



*View Looking North from Main Street and Walnut Street, June 2014*  
Source: Design Workshop

The planning team reviewed two Downtown-area concept plans with the community for feedback, at the third and final public open house. Both plans assume that the City would eventually relocate the Community Center to another location (including, potentially, to the Nelson farm area, as discussed), in order to provide City-owned land for future development. Both plans also assume that the City would eventually relocate from the existing City Hall building to another location. The present City Hall building, while built in 2000 and less than 15 years old, is already at capacity and has some structural problems that would eventually require significant spending for retrofitting. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes that the City would have to go through a more formal approval process with the Board of Aldermen and the overall community before making any moves to relocate operations from the City Hall and Community Center to another location, in order to provide lands for redevelopment efforts. Both plans also assume that the City could contribute lands located east of the Community Center, that include the site of the former track for the old Grain Valley High School facility, and to the southeast of Armstrong Park, currently home to a little league ball field, to redevelopment efforts. Given that a substantial area of land in the Sni-A-Bar Creek floodplain would be preserved as park and open space, in line with this Comprehensive Plan, the floodplain areas could serve as sites for the relocation of this Little League ball field over time.



*Existing Community Center and Parking Lot between Community Center and City Hall*  
*Source: Design Workshop*

The two potential options for the Downtown Concept Plan outlined as follows aim to extend the Downtown area to the north, toward I-70, in order to create a sufficient “critical mass” of retail shops, restaurants, offices, and potentially residential units to constitute a downtown district that would entice additional business from I-70. Downtown districts in a number of satellite communities around the Kansas City area, including Overland Park, Lee’s Summit, and Liberty, have undergone a renaissance in recent years and attracted new investment. However, all of these districts are located at least a few miles from the nearest interstate or major U.S. or state highway, and therefore face limits to the overall level of regional business that they may attract. The development of a downtown district for Grain Valley within a block or two of I-70 would create the most substantial downtown district within viewing dis-

tance of an interstate in the Kansas City area and the only one along I-70 or I-35 within the State of Missouri. Whereas developments such as Adams Dairy Landing and the projects around Little Blue Parkway in Independence were constructed using suburban development standards that may very well fade with time after only a few decades, the creation of a true downtown district for Grain Valley near I-70 would ideally create a destination that will outperform its suburban competitors over the long term and help form a true “heart” for the community and a source of significant pride.

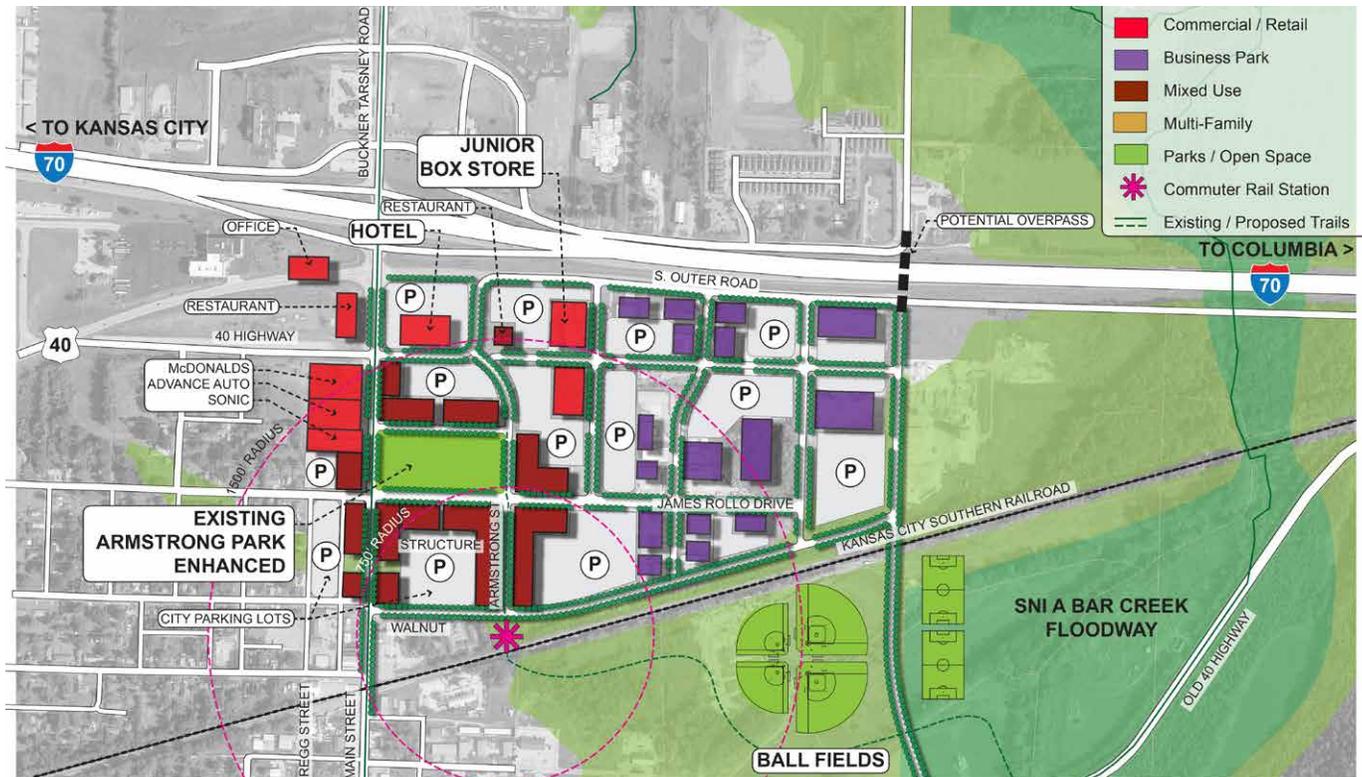
## Downtown Concept Plan – Option One

The first option for a Downtown Concept Plan assumes that the existing Armstrong Park facility, including a park shelter and children's playground equipment, would remain in the current location and serve as a unifying “town common” park anchoring a Main Street themed area of development on all four sides of the park. Traditional “Main Street” style buildings, with retail or restaurants on the ground floor and either residential or office on a second floor, would surround the park along James Rollo Drive, Main Street, and two streets along the north and east sides of the park. To the south, the existing Main Street district would extend northward from Walnut Street to James Rollo Drive. In essence, the downtown area of Grain Valley would extend north and encircle Armstrong Park over time. Main Street-style buildings could also extend south along Armstrong Street toward a potential future train station building for a commuter rail line connecting Grain Valley with Kansas City. Main Street shops and related land uses along Armstrong Street would logically terminate and orient toward the commuter train station along Walnut Street.

To the east, the Concept Plan – Option One assumes that the areas to the east of the Armstrong Park ballfields that currently include a mixture of small business shops and light industrial buildings would likely remain as business park or other commercial uses. The plan envisions these properties redeveloping into newer buildings and newer tenants as the market evolves and as the area changes into more of a downtown district. The City has the potential, given the amenities, restaurants, and services that would be available in the downtown redevelopment area, to attract more valuable office development in this area to the east. The adjacency to I-70 also presents an opportunity for Grain Valley to attract more of an “office park” group of companies to the area over time. The diagram assumes that business park or office park uses would redevelop in this area, over time.

To the north of the Armstrong Park area, the concept plan takes advantage of direct visibility and access off of I-70 and the South Outer Road and calls for the development of a junior box and in-line retailers closer to the interstate. The property that currently contains an aging truck stop facility, at the northeast corner of Main Street and South Outer Road, is envisioned to redevelop into a hotel property over time. Discussions with stakeholders and economic development officials in the community indicate that there would likely be sufficient demand for a mid-level highway oriented hotel, such as a Holiday Inn Express, Hampton Inn, or similar property at this location.

To the north and west of 40 Highway and Main Street, the plan envisions a mixture of office development and restaurant uses. This parcel represents a viable piece of property for a highway oriented development, given that recent improvements have relocated 40 Highway to a new east-west alignment (along the north side of McDonald's) and created a larger parcel for development.



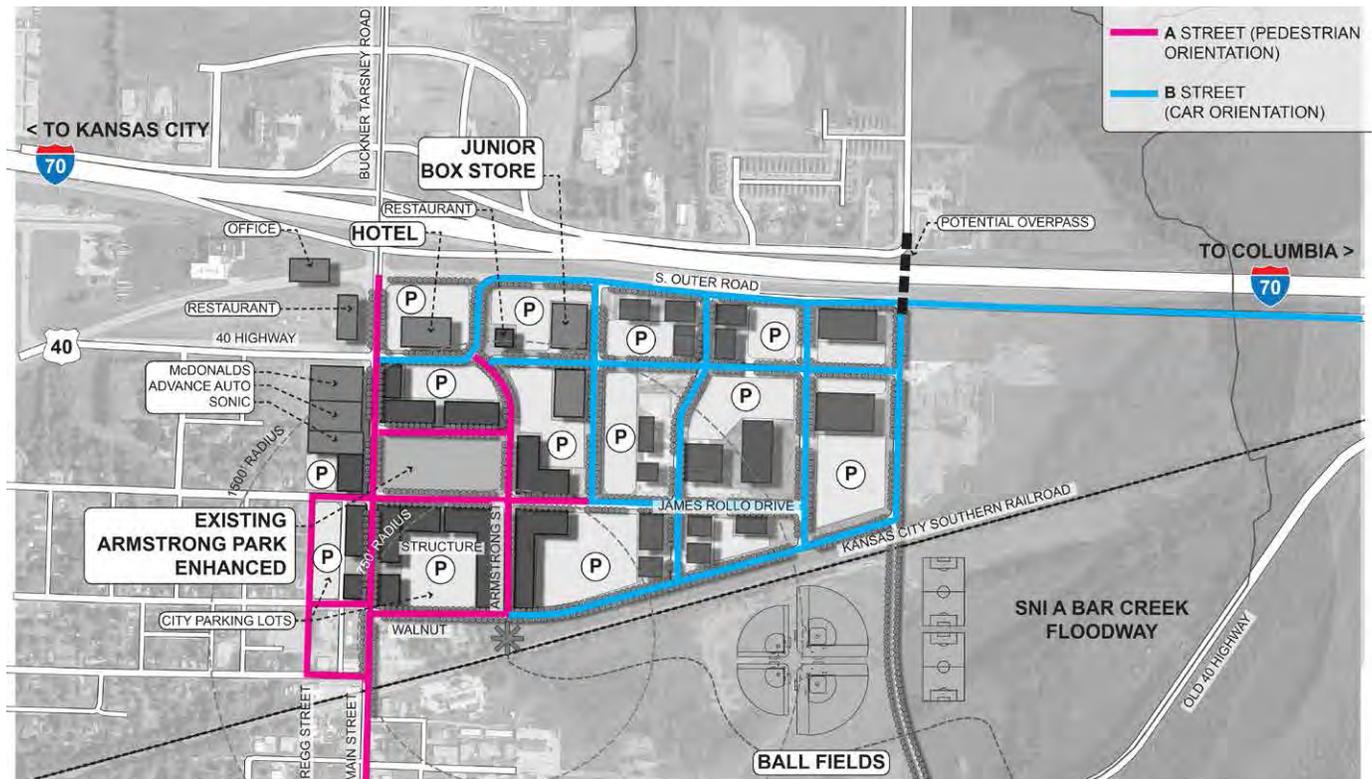
Downtown Concept Plan - Option 1  
 Source: Design Workshop

The Downtown Area Concept Plan – Option One outlines areas for parking lots within the development area. The plan assumes that developments in the area would be required to provide less substantial areas of parking – including a ratio of 4 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet for retail uses and 3.5 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet for office uses. These parking ratios are less substantial than the requirements that most cities have for suburban style developments and therefore would require less land within the downtown area for parking lots. This change would also reduce the cost of development (in terms of parking infrastructure) for projects within this part of Grain Valley. Option One provides sufficient parking for the plan as shown using surface parking lots, with one exception. A parking structure between James Rollo and Walnut, and east of Main Street, would be necessary to provide sufficient parking for the mixed-use developments in the vicinity, including on both the north and south sides of Armstrong Park. The diagram for Option One assumes that all of the “mixed use” development depicted in the maroon color would include two story buildings. The diagram also assumes that while parking lots shown may, in part, provide parking for people using the potential commuter rail line station at Walnut and Armstrong, an additional parking area (potentially to the south of the KCS line) may also be needed to provide sufficient parking for commuter rail riders.

As outlined in the diagram that follows, the Downtown Plan – Option One also outlines anticipated “A Streets” and “B Streets” in the area between I-70 and the KCS railroad tracks. “A” streets reflect those streets that are more likely to serve as key retail, restaurant, or activity streets in the district. Streetscapes on A streets should include higher levels of amenities, such as street furniture, better street trees, and enhanced lighting and signage, in order to create a more attractive and marketable environment for downtown business. Some of the “A” Streets may develop as true “Destination Streets” as described in the Transportation section of this document. In contrast, “B” streets are more likely to evolve as service streets

for the downtown district, providing access for trucks and other delivery vehicles, or as general side streets or neighborhood streets in the vicinity. “B” streets would likely include more conventional and fewer amenities compared to A streets, given their orientation.

The diagram illustrates that the streets around Armstrong Park and lining the mixed-use buildings in the district would logically develop as “A” streets while streets servicing the business park areas to the east would serve more as “B” streets over time.



Downtown Concept Plan - Option 1 Streets  
 Source: Design Workshop

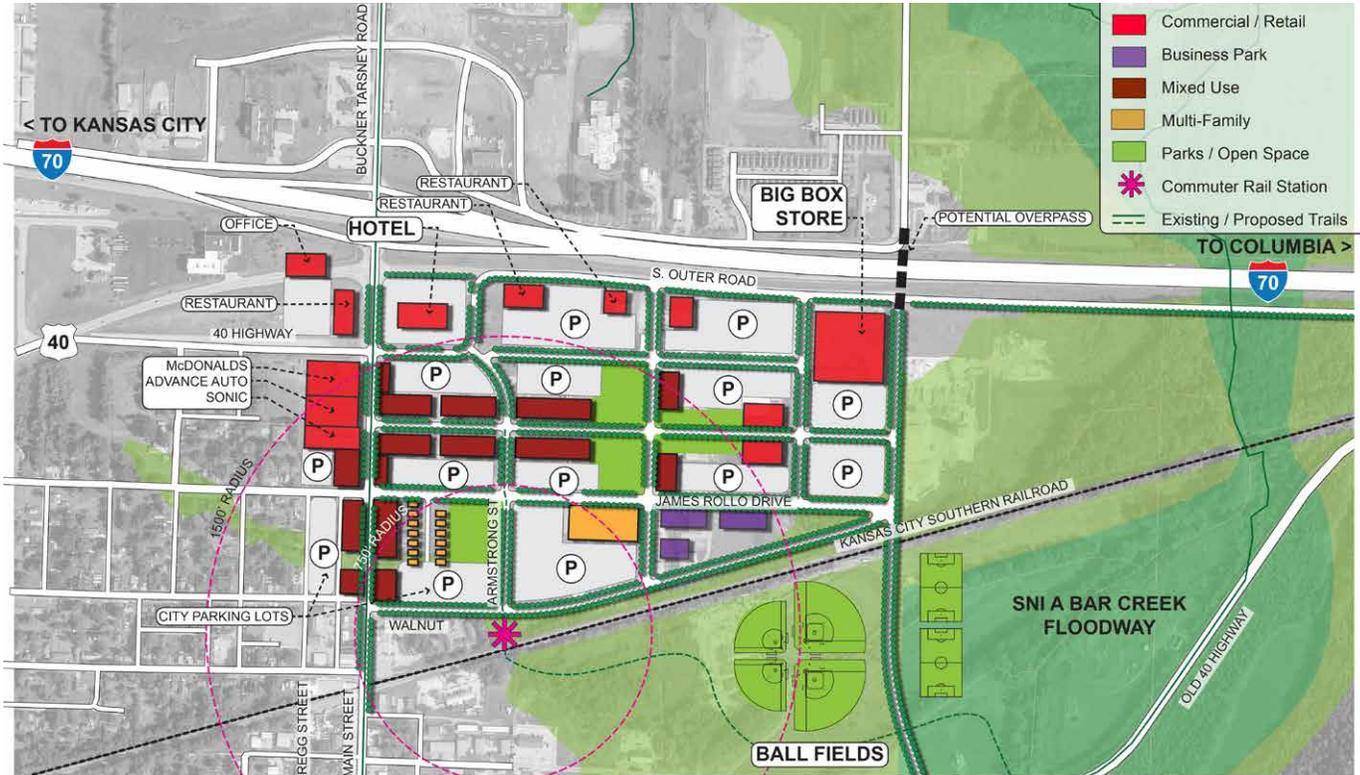
## Downtown Concept Plan – Option Two

In contrast to Option One, the Downtown Concept Plan – Option Two assumes that the City would relocate the facilities included in the existing Armstrong Park to another location in order to provide additional acreage for redevelopment and creation of a new downtown district. This option also assumes that the older light industrial area to the east of the Armstrong Park ball fields would redevelop over time into more lucrative retail properties in order to further build the tax base of Grain Valley.

The plan envisions the creation of a two block long “Main Street” that would extend from around the location of the existing City Hall building to the east, terminating in a sizeable civic park and plaza facility at the east end, along with a small area of retail to the east of the park. The plan assumes that the new development along this east-west Main Street would include at least two stories with commercial or retail on the ground floor and either office or residential units on higher floors. To the south and east of Armstrong Street and James Rollo, a new apartment complex would take advantage of the adjacency to the new downtown district and access by foot to the commuter rail station to attract new residents to the area.

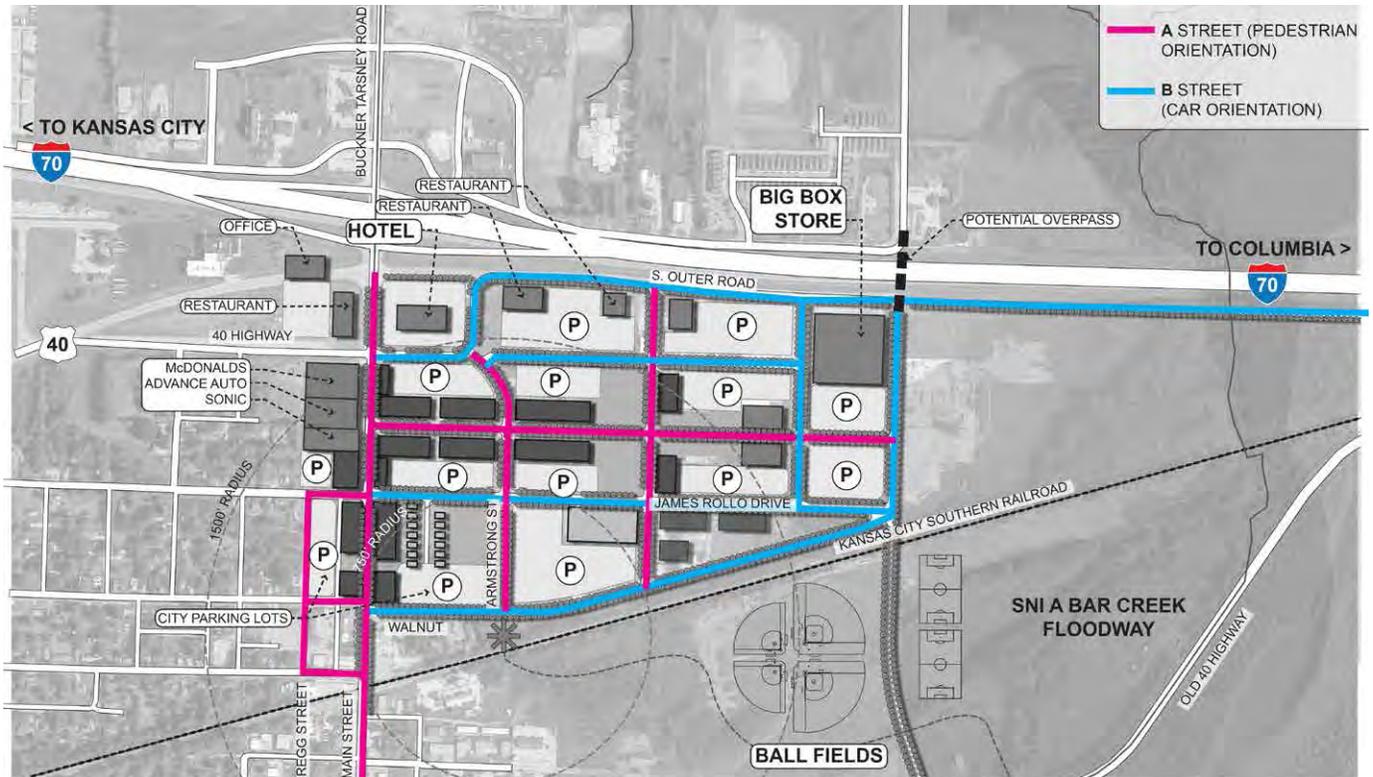
Like Option One, this plan calls for development of multi-story downtown buildings, extending northward on either side of Main Street, from Walnut to the north past James Rollo. Municipal parking lots to the east and west of Main Street would help provide sufficient parking and access to the new mixed-use properties in the area.

Similar to Option One, the plan calls for more conventional retail developments closer to I-70, including a variety of restaurants as well as a big box retail anchor toward the east end of the district, along South Outer Road. Like Option One, this plan also calls for a hotel property at the northeast corner of South Outer Road and Main Street and a combination of office and restaurant uses at the northwest corner of 40 Highway and Main Street.



Downtown Concept Plan - Option 2  
 Source: Design Workshop

The following diagram outlines the anticipated network of A Streets and B streets in the downtown area, as part of Option Two. Pedestrian-oriented A streets would follow the “Main Street” extending east-west across the middle of the district, as well as along perpendicular streets cross the Main Street alignment. B streets would logically align with the more conventional suburban tenants along and near South Outer Road.



Downtown Concept Plan - Option 2 Streets  
 Source: Design Workshop

The following images illustrate examples of the kind of “Main Street” or downtown development envisioned for the Downtown Area Concept Plan area.



West Glen Town Center, West Des Moines, Iowa  
 Source: Confluence



Main Street, New Town at St. Charles, St. Charles, Missouri  
 Source: Design Workshop

The following table outlines the anticipated development program for the two Downtown concept plans at full build-out.

**Table 5: Development Program, Downtown Area Concept Plans**

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM - OPTIONS 1 AND 2		
	OPTION 1	OPTION 2
New Commercial / Retail *	179,625 SF	304,400 SF
Mixed-Use	872,026 SF	820,026 SF
Business Park	377,925 SF	59,675 SF
Multi-Family	0	199,500 SF
Parks	4.5 Acres	6.9 Acres
<b>Total New Development (SF)</b>	<b>1,429,576</b>	<b>1,383,601</b>

\* Does not include McDonald's, Advance Auto, or Sonic

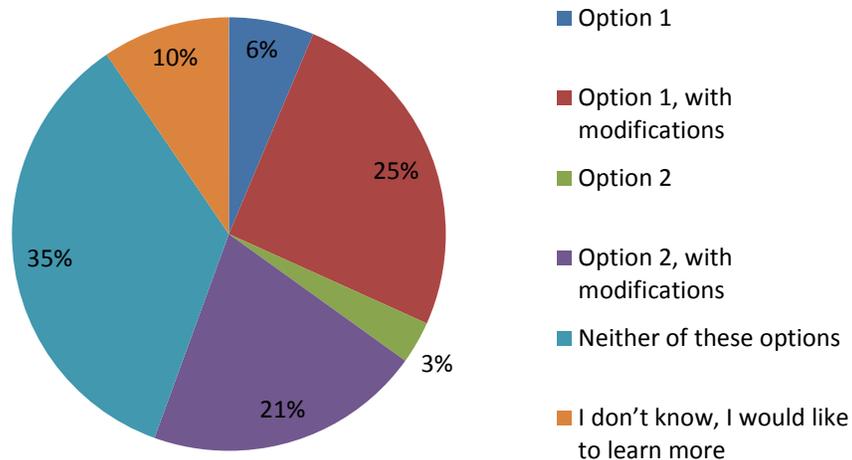
Source: Design Workshop

*Public Support for Downtown Area Concept Plan Options*

The majority of respondents at the final public open house and in an online version of the survey presented at the open house supported at least some form of the downtown development options outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, 55 percent either supported Option 1, Option 2, or some variation of the two options. Around 35 percent did not support either option and ten percent remained unsure. The community will continue the dialogue concerning plans for the area between I-70 and the historic downtown of Grain Valley in coming years. The options outlined in this plan were intended to represent a starting point for the discussion. However, it does appear that the majority of people involved in the comprehensive plan process support the idea of exploring the reuse of city property near I-70 to develop a mixed-use development that would strengthen the downtown district and attract increased business from the interstate.

**Figure 24: Survey Question Results Concerning Downtown Development Options**

**Q6. I am in favor of the following conceptual plan for the area from Downtown north to I-70.**



Source: Design Workshop

## Guide to Developing New Communities and Growth Areas

As Grain Valley continues to grow into outlying areas over the next few decades, the community must work to coordinate development in order to avoid the “piecemeal” nature of development that has occurred on occasion in the past and to create well planned and higher quality new neighborhoods and districts.

The following diagram and text are intended to help guide developers, elected leaders, and city officials in designing new neighborhoods and developments over the next few decades.

Figure 25: Prototypical Neighborhood Center Layout



### DESIGN CRITERIA:

**1/2 MI** Radius  
around Neighborhood Centers

4 Neighborhood centers oriented  
around each Village Center

**1/2 MI**  
Distance from  
Residences to  
Neighborhood Parks

Non-vehicular trail  
access between  
Neighborhood and  
Village Centers and  
Schools

Schools Centralized  
around Neighborhood  
Centers

### LEGEND

Neighborhood Center ●  
Village Center ●

Elementary School 🚩  
Middle School 🚩  
High School 🚩  
Neighborhood Park 🟩

Open Space / Floodplain 🟩  
Trails 🟩  
Major Roads —

Source: Design Workshop

As new neighborhoods and developments of all sizes move forward, Grain Valley should use the following principles to guide projects and overall planning.

- Every residence in the community should generally be located within walking distance (around a half-mile) of a neighborhood center.
- A neighborhood center would ideally be located within walking distance and have good linkages (through trails or walkways) to a neighborhood school (in most cases, an elementary school). A neighborhood center would likely, depending on the local real estate market, include a small retail shopping area and a few restaurants (similar to the concept plan shown for the Duncan and Buckner Tarsney area).
- A total of four neighborhood centers would orient around a larger “village center” that would include larger scale retail, office, and restaurant options and key community facilities such as recreation centers. A village center would ideally be located in conjunction or very close to a larger scale school for the area, such as a middle school or high school. A village center in many ways would serve as another “downtown” for a newer part of Grain Valley in the future.
- Developments and planning on the part of the City's parks and recreation department would provide for a complete system of walking and running trails, and open space corridors, connecting neighborhood centers and village centers together.

Many of the more notable and successful “master planned communities” created by private developers around the country have followed this methodology and in the process have created well integrated projects that provide amenities to a wide variety of residents and a logical system of neighborhood and village centers. By following this logic, Grain Valley can create a set of “centers” in newer areas of the community over the next few decades that become highly valued satellite districts for various developments.

#### *Best Practices: Commercial and Mixed-Use Corridors*

As Grain Valley moves forward over time to develop major arterials that may contain commercial or mixed-use development (such as Buckner-Tarsney Road, Lefholz Road, Pink Hill Road, or other arterials), the following best practices may help inform future planning.

- The community should work with developers to install a system of local streets running parallel to major corridors (typically spaced around one block on one or both sides of a main arterial or parkway). These types of local streets, sometimes referred to as “back streets” or “reverse frontage roads” serve the following key purposes.
  - Parallel streets provide an alternative route to major arterials and therefore provide relief from congestion along major arterials, particularly during peak travel times.
  - Parallel streets provide for alternative access points to local businesses, and therefore may reduce the number of driveways needed to serve businesses or properties along key corridors.
  - Parallel streets provide the opportunity to introduce a “grid” of streets that better connect local neighborhoods with key corridors in a community. A grid of streets in a neighborhood that connects to a parallel street to a major arterial allows for easier access, via walking, biking, or driving, from residential areas to nearby shopping and community gathering areas.
- The community should work to design future corridors to include facilities for people walking and biking, including sidewalks, multi-use paths (on one or both sides of the road), bike lanes, bike sharrows, and bike storage facilities.

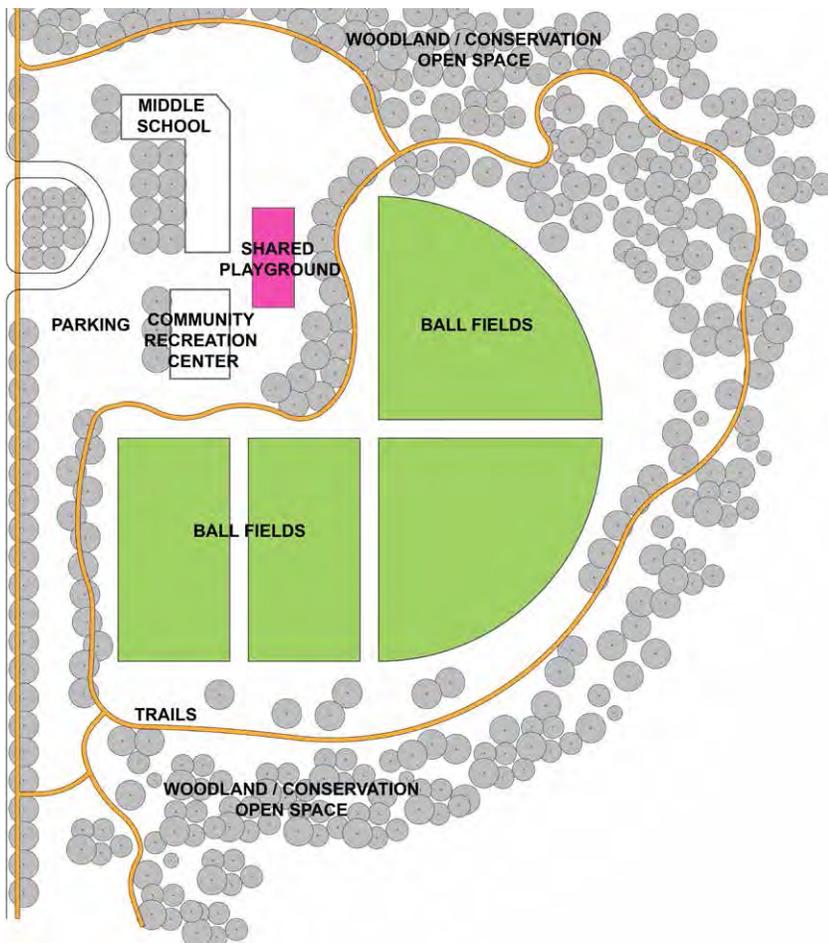
- Grain Valley should work with developers and local neighborhoods to develop designs for particular corridors that provide for an attractive aesthetic look and distinctive “feel”. As Grain Valley develops into a larger community over time, it has the potential to create a unique look and “sense of place” that will make the area feel more distinctive, compared to a conventional Midwestern suburb.

*Best Practices: Design of Multi-Purpose School and Civic Facilities*

As the community continues to expand into newer areas over the next few decades, it should continue to look for opportunities to locate city and school owned facilities in close proximity or in the same project in order to minimize costs of infrastructure and to take advantage of efficiencies in parking and the co-sharing of facilities.

For example, as outlined in the diagram that follows, the city and school district may work together to co-locate recreational facilities and school campuses in order to provide benefits to both the City and district. Developing a middle school, for example, next to a community recreation facility would allow for shared use of parking lots and for shared use of gymnasiums and playing fields between the two entities, rather than building duplicate versions of each amenity on two different properties. A series of park and open space trails or sidewalks could connect the city and school facilities together as well, and provide connectivity to nearby park or open space areas.

**Figure 26:** *Prototypical Development of School Facilities Co-Located with Parks and Recreation Facilities*



Source: Design Workshop



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Grain Valley was one of the fastest growing communities in Missouri from 1990 to 2010, growing from a population of just over 2,000 residents in 1990 to over 12,000 residents in 2010. The Kansas City area overall has grown at a steady pace over the last two decades, and Grain Valley has emerged as a leading, new “bedroom community” serving the eastern portion of the metropolitan region. As the community plans for the next two decades, one of Grain Valley’s key goals is to transition from a primarily residential community to one better balanced with a wider range of employment and commercial options and opportunities. Grain Valley seeks to become a more complete community – encouraging the creation of jobs in addition to expanding residential development.

## Population and Housing Trends

The strong reputation of the Grain Valley School District, combined with relatively affordable housing prices, have made the Grain Valley area an attractive place to live, particularly for families with children.

While Blue Springs and Independence have exhibited more rapid population growth over the last twenty years, Grain Valley’s growth has been dramatic since 1990 and has significantly outpaced the growth of Independence and Oak Grove during this time frame. During the real estate boom of 2004 through 2007, Grain Valley approved well over 100 single family residential permits each year. The construction of all types of residential and commercial space slowed considerably during the Great Recession. However, residential construction has rebounded over the last year as the overall economy has improved. Over the ten year period from 2004 to 2013, Grain Valley approved 1,130 single-family permits within the City limits, an average of approximately 113 annually. The following tables detail building permit data for the City for the last several years, as well as population changes in Grain Valley and neighboring cities over the last few decades.

**Table 6:** *City of Grain Valley Building Permit Information*

	NEW SINGLE FAMILY HOME PERMITS	NEW DUPLEX / FOURPLEX PERMITS	NEW COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION PERMITS	NEW MULTI-FAMILY PERMITS
2004	311	26	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
2005	361	29	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
2006	83	32	Data Not Available	Data Not Available
2007	195	13	11	3
2008	30	2	4	0
2009	18	0	4	0
2010	30	1	0	0
2011	34	1	2	0
2012	29	6	3	0
2013	39	3	4	1
2014 *	50	Data Not Available	Data Not Available	Data Not Available

\* Year To Date (as of June 2014)

Source: *City of Grain Valley*

**Table 7: Historical Population Growth, Grain Valley and Peer Cities**

	GRAIN VALLEY	BLUE SPRINGS	OAK GROVE	INDEPENDENCE	LEE'S SUMMIT
1990	2,132	40,745	4,832	112,374	47,161
2000	5,160	48,080	5,535	113,288	70,700
2010	12,854	52,575	7,795	116,830	91,364
2012	13,246	52,735	7,724	116,551	92,290

Source: ESRI

**Table 8: 2010 Housing Profile, Grain Valley and Peer Cities**

	GRAIN VALLEY	BLUE SPRINGS	LEE'S SUMMIT
Total Housing Units	4,662	20,280	35,360
Occupied Housing Units	4,266	19,086	33,493
Total Housing Vacancy Rate	8%	6%	5%
Homeowner Vacancy Rate	2%	3%	2%
Rental Vacancy Rate	7%	7%	8%
Owner Occupied Housing Units	2,801	13,580	25,348
Rental Housing Units	1,465	5,506	8,145
Homeownership Rate	66%	71%	76%
1 Unit Detached	3,282	14,691	25,973
1 Unit Attached	665	2,000	3,309
2 Units	515	662	1,176
3 - 19 Units	187	2,562	3,500
20 + Units	13	274	1,341
Mobile Homes	0	91	61
Median Housing Value	\$153,700	\$148,100	\$185,100

Source: US Census 2010

The table that follows illustrates the projected population for Grain Valley through 2035, based upon the historical rate of growth over the last twenty years. Using this conservative estimate, the population of the city would exceed 32,000 residents in 2035. Using a generally accepted household size of 2.5 persons per household, the expected population growth will create demand for more than 7,700 new housing units between 2010 and 2035.

**Table 9: Projected Grain Valley Population Through 2035**

1990	2,132
2000	5,160
2010	12,854
2020 (Projected)	20,548
2025 (Projected)	24,395
2030 (Projected)	28,242
2035 (Projected)	32,089

Source: Design Workshop

Regional trends in the Kansas City area suggest that Grain Valley may experience increased demand for townhomes and other attached, maintenance-free living options to serve the increasing number of Empty Nesters and retirees, in addition to traditional single family detached homes. The Grain Valley area is unlikely to experience demand for multi-story apartments or condominiums, given that these higher density residential developments usually fare better in central city environments (such as Downtown Kansas City or the Country Club Plaza) as opposed to more affordable suburban areas such as Grain Valley.

### *Employment and Commercial Development Conditions and Trends*

#### **Commercial**

As Grain Valley has traditionally served as a residentially-focused community, it has not had a large primary employment base to date. The community has potential to attract employment across a variety of industry sectors, ranging from services to trade and transportation related entities and a variety of other companies, given the strategic location of Grain Valley along the I-70 corridor. The presence of business park lands along Interstate 70, combined with Grain Valley's position in close proximity to Kansas City, should make the area attractive to a variety of companies.

#### **R&D / Industrial / Flex / Warehouse**

The Grain Valley area currently includes buildings in flex and warehouse categories, primarily located along Jefferson Drive, to the north of I-70 and west of Main Street. The East Kansas City Business Park in this vicinity offers potential space for a variety of smaller users, ranging from storage facilities to small manufacturers. Other light industrial lands exist to the east of City Hall and south of I-70. As the economy continues to recover from the Great Recession, Grain Valley has the potential to capture a portion of new industrial and flex / warehouse demand in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

#### **Office / Medical**

Grain Valley has a limited amount of office and medical space, given its distance from the heart of the metropolitan area and the lack of a hospital facility in the community. Existing office buildings in the community range from properties constructed in the 1970s to newer medical office buildings constructed in the 2000s. As the population continues to grow over the next two decades, demand for office space will logically grow as well, as the needs for various services (ranging from banking to insurance to various professional services offices) increase.

#### **Retail**

Grain Valley is currently losing a significant portion of its internally generated retail demand to Blue Springs and other neighboring communities. The presence of a significant area of retail and big box development at Adams Dairy Parkway and I-70 in Blue Springs, around two miles to the west of the Grain Valley exit, has limited the potential for various retail uses, in the short term, in the Grain Valley area. The table outlines the retail categories that Grain Valley is, in particular, losing to neighboring communities.

The shopping plaza at SW Eagles Parkway and Buckner-Tarsney Road is the main existing shopping plaza in the Grain Valley community at the present time, including a small grocery

store (Patricia's), several restaurants, and a variety of in-line retailers. The Grain Valley Marketplace on the northeast corner of I-70 and Main Street is slated to include a cinema, three restaurant pad sites, and space for smaller retailers. A few smaller pockets of retail exist elsewhere in the community, including a few stores along Main Street, fast food eateries to the south of I-70 and Main Street, and a few smaller shops and restaurants along SW Eagles Parkway near the intersection with Sni-A-Bar Boulevard.

In general, as Grain Valley continues to add residential population, retail demand will continue to increase. In particular, residential growth in eastern Grain Valley is likely to have a stronger effect on demand for retail in the city, as these new residents would have to travel through Grain Valley in order to reach employment centers in the Kansas City metropolitan area. In contrast, many residents in the western portion of the city currently can easily access the variety of retail options present in Blue Springs, while traveling en route to work, without having to visit a Grain Valley establishment.

### ***Hotel***

Grain Valley currently has one hotel in operation, the Comfort Inn at Jefferson Drive and Main Street. The lack of employers in the community has limited demand for hotel uses to date. Continued population and employment growth, coupled with the city's location on I-70, will make the areas around the Main Street / I-70 interchange attractive for further hotel development. In addition, a number of aging hotel and motel properties in the Blue Springs area, around the I-70 and 7 Highway interchange, will likely be replaced in the near to mid term. Grain Valley has the potential to absorb a portion of this inventory of hotel and motel rooms as older properties in Blue Springs are demolished or face continued obsolescence. Given the interchange improvements at the Main Street interchange with I-70 and the congestion often present at the 7 Highway interchange in Blue Springs, Grain Valley has the potential to emerge as a new "destination location" for hotel and lodging properties at the eastern end of the metropolitan area. The Grain Valley area could emerge as the first major area of lodging available to travelers along I-70 as they approach the Kansas City area from rural western Missouri.

## Economic Development Vision

The following elements of the Economic Development Vision will guide Grain Valley over the next two decades.

- The City will actively pursue the development of a larger scale (100-200 acres, or more) business park area along or near I-70, in order to attract larger employers and help to balance the residential base of the community with a broader and larger pool of employers.
- The community will continue to pursue various types of retail development, in order to provide a broader roster of shopping choices for residents and visitors, and to provide an additional base of sales tax revenue.
- The City will use the menu of economic incentives and programs at its disposal to attract new employers to the community.
- The city will continue to encourage development of a variety of residential products and communities to serve a broad range of household and population types.

### *Economic Development Goals*

*Goal 1: Grain Valley will continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce to increase the number of jobs within the City in an effort to reach a balance of one job for every household.*

***Policy 1.1: Plan for and encourage an adequate supply of land for base employment development in clearly defined target locations or areas.***

- Action 1.1.1: Maintain continual coordination between Grain Valley land use policies and economic development plans and policies to assure an inventory of parcels suitable for primary employment uses that are in Comprehensive Plan-designated centers and employment areas.
- Action 1.1.2: Work to create a clear and consistent policy to provide incentives for primary employment uses.

***Policy 1.2: Participate in redevelopment projects in specific targeted areas.***

- Action 1.2.1: Support the efforts of property owners and local business organizations in revitalization efforts in Downtown Grain Valley.
- Action 1.2.3: Explore opportunities for redevelopment of areas to the east of City Hall, as outlined in the concept plans for this area.
- Action 1.2.4: Evaluate other targeted areas within the City for redevelopment potential.





# IMPLEMENTATION

The Implementation Section identifies the key, overarching Action Items that the City of Grain Valley should pursue, drawing from the various sections of the Comprehensive Plan, over the next several years.

## ACTION ITEMS:

### *1) Completion of Annexation Plan*

As the community moves forward, the City of Grain Valley should complete a formal Annexation Plan that would prioritize areas that may be annexed into the City in the future, as well as the policies of the community concerning the annexation process. Given the discussions and input provided by the community and stakeholders during the planning process, this Comprehensive Plan document recommends that the City, in particular, make the annexation of properties around the I-70 and Lefholz Road area a first priority for the community, going forward. The area around I-70 and Lefholz represents a key potential area for development in the eastern portion of the community in the future and the likely focal point for larger scale retail, mixed-use, and business park development for Grain Valley over the next one to two decades. The City should explore options for annexation of this area as soon as possible, ensure that the area will become a part of Grain Valley (as opposed to another community) and to ensure, through the policies and procedures of the City, that the area will grow and develop in a higher quality manner.

The completion of an Annexation Plan for Grain Valley would prioritize areas for future annexations into the community, and in the process would help provide city leaders and staff further guidance for how the community is likely to grow in the future. However, regardless of the priority of areas for future annexation, the laws of the State of Missouri would govern the process of annexation of any property surrounding the City of Grain Valley. The following provides an overview of the annexation process, under the laws of the State of Missouri that govern annexation.

Option 1: Voluntary Annexation: The owners of property that is contiguous and compact to the existing City boundary, outside the City Limits, may voluntarily request annexation into a City, and the governing body of the City may elect to accept the voluntary annexation request. Specifically, the owners of all properties identified in the area to be annexed, or the majority of all owners of the annexation area (if the annexation area includes a condominium complex, a cooperative, a common-interest community, or a planned community), may file a notarized petition requesting annexation to the governing body of the City. The Board of Aldermen would then hold a public hearing concerning the annexation request to receive evidence from any interested person, and the Board of Aldermen would vote upon the request for annexation. The Board of Aldermen would have the power to approve the annexation request by ordinance, if the City determines it to be reasonable and necessary to the proper development of the City and is able to provide normal municipal services to the area covered by the annexation request within a reasonable period of time.

Under Missouri state law, the petition for annexation would undergo an appeals process if a total of at least two percent of the qualified voters of the City, or two qualified voters of the area covered by the annexation request (assuming the area contains at least two qualified voters) files a written objection to the proposed annexation within fourteen days of the public hearing concerning the annexation request.

Option 2: Involuntary Annexation: Cities in Missouri may involuntarily annex areas outside their city limits. However, residents and property owners in areas identified for involuntary annexation have a number of protest procedures available to them under Missouri state law. This process involves public hearings and formal votes of residents living in particular annexation areas. The Missouri Revised Statutes, Chapter 71, provides more detailed information concerning the procedures and rules governing involuntary annexation requests.

### *2) Establish Authority for Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction Planning*

The City of Grain Valley does not currently have any jurisdiction over land use decisions outside of its city limits. However, developments and land use decisions made concerning properties and tracts of land located in close proximity to the City materially impact the future growth potential and patterns of growth of the City going forward. Although Jackson County has formal land use authority over unincorporated areas located outside of Grain Valley, the City should explore, with County leaders, the possibility of granting Extra-Territorial Jurisdictional (ETJ) authority over land use and zoning issues within a specified area surrounding the Grain Valley city limits. Allowing the City to control land use and development issues in areas surrounding its boundaries would allow it to more proactively plan for the future growth of the community and to avoid the development of projects that would not fit with the future vision of the community for the area.

### *3) Pursue Strategic Annexations*

The City should explore completing a few larger scale annexations that would proactively provide room for the community to grow in the future, in line with the vision of the community articulated in the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, the City should explore annexations over the next few years in the following key locations:

Area Around I-70 and Lefholz: The City should, in particular, explore proactive annexation of areas surrounding I-70 and Lefholz. As discussed in this plan, the Lefholz area represents a key area for the future growth and expansion of the community and key north-south transportation corridor along the east side of Grain Valley. The area could develop into a vital area for a new business park and larger scale retail development that would significantly enhance the community's economic position. Strategically annexing the areas around I-70 and Lefholz would allow Grain Valley to more directly control how the area develops over time and in the process maximize the benefits of future development to the overall community.

Area Around Duncan and Buckner-Tarsney: The City has incorporated a portion of the focus area around Duncan and Buckner-Tarsney. The City should explore annexation of remaining parcels within walking distance of this focus area to more directly control the evolution of this focus area, as discussed in the Comprehensive Plan.

Area Around Sni-A-Bar and Buckner-Tarsney: The City has incorporated the west side of Buckner-Tarsney in the vicinity of the focus area around Sni-A-Bar Boulevard, but the eastern side of the road currently remains in unincorporated Jackson County. In order to better coordinate the future growth and development of this area, the City should explore over time the annexation of this area into Grain Valley.

Areas Along the Western Edge of Grain Valley: A handful of parcels remain in unincorporated Jackson County, between Blue Springs and Grain Valley. The City should more formally coordinate the eventual annexation of these properties with the City of Blue Springs,

to avoid “surprise” annexations from Blue Springs and to more proactively coordinate the expansion of services to newly annexed parcels in this area over time.

#### *4) Negotiate Annexation Agreements with Surrounding Water Districts*

Unincorporated areas surrounding Grain Valley are currently served by rural water districts, and service agreements in these areas dictate that the City must make payments to these water districts when incorporating new areas into Grain Valley. These payments are intended to compensate the rural water districts for the loss of customers and territory going forward, as the City would serve newly annexed areas with its own water service. However, in many cases the compensation amount to the rural water districts, on a per acre basis, have made the annexation of new areas of the City financially undesirable, from the municipality’s perspective. The City should proactively work with Jackson County leaders and representatives from the surrounding water districts to establish pre-determined rates for compensation for the districts in the event of annexation, that would fairly compensate the districts and at the same time allow the City to move forward with annexations that make sense. The current arrangements have limited the ability of the City to expand development, particularly to the north and south of town, and negotiating agreements with the water districts would make it easier for developers to move forward with projects as part of the City of Grain Valley.

#### *5) Complete Feasibility Studies for Relocation of Community Center and City Hall*

The City is rapidly outgrowing its existing City Hall facility and its Community Center is already operating at capacity. At the same time, as discussed in the Comprehensive Plan, the areas around the existing City Hall and Community Center could be redeveloped into an extension of the downtown area and the creation of a new mixed-use development, to the east of Main Street and south of I-70. The majority of respondents during the comprehensive planning process supported exploring the relocation of these facilities over time. As an action step resulting from the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City should formally complete feasibility studies concerning the relocation and replacement of the Community Center and City Hall. Completing these studies over the next one to two years would provide community leaders with a menu of options for the potential relocation of the facilities and allow the community to more formally move forward with concepts for the redevelopment of the area south of I-70 and east of Main Street.

#### *6) Complete Formal Access Management Plan for the City*

The Comprehensive Plan outlines, in the Transportation section, concepts concerning access management and its importance in the planning of existing and future collector and arterial streets in the community. In order to avoid confusion and allow property owners and developers to understand the future design of various corridors in Grain Valley, the City should complete a more formal access management plan. The plan would outline specific guidelines for driveway spacings, intersection spacings, medians, and other elements of access management for various street types and perhaps even for specific corridors in the community.

### *7) Complete Parks and Open Space Master Plan*

The Comprehensive Plan outlines general guidelines for the future growth and development of parks and open space in the community, including the designation of floodplain areas as park and open space areas going forward. As an action item resulting from the Comprehensive Plan, the City should complete a more detailed Parks and Open Space Master Plan. This document would outline the plans for specific future parks facilities around the community and outline guidelines for the maintenance and programming of parks and open space facilities going forward.

### *8) Integrate Form Based Codes into Development Code*

Many communities are implementing Form Based Codes as part of their formal entitlement process and development code to better help shape the look and feel of development. A Form Based Code allows property owners and developers increased flexibility in terms of allowed land uses for a particular development, but provides a greater degree of guidance concerning urban design parameters including setbacks, build-to lines, architecture and fenestration, and landscaping. The intent of Form Based Codes is to encourage the development of places that will stand the test of time, from a design perspective, even as the underlying land uses change over the years. The City of Grain Valley should explore how to integrate a Form Based Code into its overall set of Development Codes and Ordinances going forward.

### *9) Revise and Adopt Concept Plans as Subarea Plans*

The concept plans for the four focus areas outlined in this Comprehensive Plan (for the Downtown area, for the I-70 and Lefholz area, the Buckner-Tarsney and Duncan area, and for the Sni-A-Bar and Buckner-Tarsney area) met with general support from participants in the comprehensive plan process. As a set of action items resulting from this plan, Grain Valley should continue to iterate the plans for the concept plans with local stakeholders and formally adopt the concept plans as “Subarea Plans” for the particular areas of the community. The Subarea Plans would more formally guide future development and growth in these four focus areas going forward. City officials and elected leaders would use the Subarea Plans as a guide in evaluating future development proposals concerning these particular areas of the community.

### *10) Develop Formal Marketing Strategy for Grain Valley*

Grain Valley is poised for continued growth over the next two decades as the Kansas City metropolitan area continues to expand to the east. However, to attract more companies and higher quality development going forward, the City should consider creating and adopting a more formal marketing strategy and program to promote the economic development of the community. The marketing strategy would communicate a consistent message to potential new companies or developments and would also articulate the vision of Grain Valley for the future. A consistent marketing strategy would allow community leaders to more effectively reach out to new business opportunities in coming years and increase the base of business in Grain Valley.

## Overview of Potential Implementation Tools and Strategies

In order to achieve the economic development goals of the community to expand and better balance its tax base between commercial and residential land uses, Grain Valley must use all of the tools at its disposal to attract and retain companies and new development. The plan envisions new commercial and industrial development around I-70 and the Main Street interchange, around a potential new interchange at I-70 and Lefholz Road, and along other key arterials such as Buckner-Tarsney and Duncan Roads over the next two decades to build the tax base of the City and reduce the property tax burden on residential land uses. The various goals associated with Quality of Life in the Plan encompass topics including Complete Streets, the maintenance and expansion of a top-notch parks and recreation program, the preservation of the scenic beauty and environmental assets of Sni-A-Bar Creek and sensitive environmental areas in the community, and the creation of Village and Neighborhood Centers, as the community grows, to create a true “sense of place”.

To implement the land use and quality of life goals outlined in the Plan, it is important that the City send signals to the real estate development marketplace to attract the desired types of development. Various incentive and financing approaches can assist the City in achieving these goals. Importantly, the desire of the City to grow and assist with growth (through the provision of infrastructure and incentives necessary to attract growth) must be balanced by the fiscal and financial constraints of the city as it grows. The City must carefully weigh the benefits versus costs of new development and, through analyses of Return on Investment, must ensure that incentives and tools used to attract development do not negate the tax generation benefits of new development.

A number of implementation tools are available in Missouri for municipalities to encourage desired types and locations of development. The City of Grain Valley may find some additional tools to be useful in achieving certain goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

### *Funding Sources*

The City of Grain Valley may pursue a variety of funding sources and strategies to finance the various improvements outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and help to facilitate ongoing development in the community. In addition to the funding categories identified below, the City of Grain Valley may explore a variety of funding sources at the federal or state level to provide resources to complete various improvements in the community over time. The

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) provides a variety of funding for streetscape and transportation projects through the resources of MARC. The potential to secure funding through these resources is dependant on a variety of factors, including the pool of available money, and the funding formulas used to rank applications made by local jurisdictions. In addition, the federal TIGER program has provided for a variety of streetscape and transportation improvements in the Kansas City area and represents another potential source of funding for transportation improvements.

### *Transportation Development District (TDD)*

A transportation development district (TDD) provides another tool that the public and private sectors in Missouri may use, either separately or in conjunction with other economic development tools, to support economic growth in local communities. State statutes

provide a great deal of flexibility with regard to TDD formation and execution, and therefore local communities across the state have pursued TDDs as a popular economic development tool over the last twenty-plus years.

The state's TDD Act, enacted in 1990, allows for the formation of local transportation development districts (or "TDDs") to fund, promote, plan, design, construct, improve, maintain, and operate one or more transportation projects within the district's boundaries. Eligible projects may include bridges, streets, highways, interchanges, intersections, signage, signalization, parking lots, bus stops, stations, garages, terminals, hangars, shelters, rest areas, docks, wharves, lake or river ports, airports, railroads, light rail, or other mass transit and any similar or related improvements or infrastructure. A District may be formed through a petition of local residents, the consent of all property owners in the designated area, or by a local governing body or transit agency. Before the construction or funding of any projects within the TDD, the District must submit project information and budgets to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for approval. In cases where the proposed improvements will not fall under the jurisdiction of the state Commission (MoDOT), the local jurisdiction must review and approve project information and budgets.

Similar to TIF, in the case of TDDs the property owner / developer does not need to come out of pocket with money to pay for the publicly financed improvements funded by the TDD, but is ultimately responsible to bondholders if the tax revenue generated by the improvements is insufficient to make the payments. TDDs raise revenues within the boundaries of the district through the following types of mechanisms:

- Bonds, notes, and other obligations: The TDD may issue obligations in order to raise money to finance transportation improvements in the district.
- Sales Tax: A TDD may impose a district sales tax, in increments of one-eighth of one percent up to a maximum of one percent, on the receipts from all retail sales made in the district. Retailers in the district must prominently display the rate of the sales tax imposed or increased as a result of the TDD sales tax, in the cash register area.
- Alternate Sales Tax: In cases where a TDD district encompasses an entire city or county, the relevant governing bodies (with voter approval) may impose an Alternate TDD Sales Tax on all retail sales made in the District. The Alternate TDD Sales Tax may be imposed at a rate of one-eighth of one percent, one-fourth of one percent, three-eighths of one percent, one-half of one percent, or one percent and must be uniform across the District.
- Property Tax: Assuming approval by at least four-sevenths of the qualified voters in the TDD District, the TDD District may impose a property tax in the amount not to exceed the annual rate of ten cents on each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation.
- Special Assessments: The TDD District may assess one or more special assessments for specially designated project improvements if approved by the majority of qualified voters or the owners of record of all of the real property located in the district who sign a special assessment petition.
- Toll Roads: The TDD District may charge and collect tolls or fees for the use of a transportation project. In order to do this, the District may relocate an existing state highway, subject to approval by the Commission, or an existing local public street or road, subject to approval by the local governmental body with jurisdiction over the road. TDDs, in contrast to Tax Increment Financing, raise their own taxes and do not simply divert tax revenues from another political entity (such as a school district or local city or town).

In addition, TDDs have emerged as a good complement to an existing or new TIF district, especially in cases where the TDD can pay for a portion of transportation improvements and thereby allow the TIF to fund other public improvements, such as utilities, streetscape, or other infrastructure. Given the political controversy that has surrounded the use of TIF in recent years, the TDD concept has a fairly bright future across Missouri in helping to promote and support local economic development efforts.

### *Community Improvement District (CID)*

In contrast to Transportation Development Districts, that are only able to fund transportation-related improvements, a CID can finance a wide array of public improvements and services that can enhance the district. A CID can be established by a government entity or a non-profit and requires the approval of a petition signed by the property owners that collectively own at least 50 percent of the assessed value in the proposed district, and by a total of more than 50 per capita of all owners of real property within the proposed district. The petition must outline a five year plan that describes the purposes of the proposed district, the services it will provide, the improvements it will make and an estimate of the costs of the project. Once the petition is filed, the governing body of the particular municipality in question must hold a public hearing and approve the creation of the proposed district by ordinance.

In contrast to a Neighborhood Improvement District, a CID is a separate legal entity, and operates distinct and apart from the municipality that creates the district. The CID may finance improvements through the imposition of 1) special assessments for those improvements that specifically benefit the properties within the district, 2) property taxes, or 3) a sales tax up to a maximum of one percent. A CID may finance the costs of a project through the charging of fees, rents, and charges for district property or services, or grants, gifts, and donations. A CID may also issue bonds, notes, and other obligations to fund improvements.

A CID may finance the following types of improvements within its boundaries:

- Pedestrian or shopping malls and plazas
- Parks, lawns, trees, and any other landscape
- Convention centers, arenas, aquariums, aviaries and meeting facilities
- Sidewalks, streets, alleys, bridges, ramps, tunnels, overpasses and underpasses, traffic signs and signals, utilities, drainage, water, storm and sewer systems and other site improvements
- Streetscape, lighting, benches or other seating furniture, trash receptacles, marquees, awnings, canopies, walls and barriers
- Telephone and information booths, bus stop and other shelters, rest rooms and kiosks
- Music, news and child care facilities
- Lakes, dams and waterways
- Paintings, murals, display cases, sculptures and fountains
- Parking lots, garages or other facilities

A CID may also provide a variety of public services, including the following:

- With the municipality's consent, prohibit or restrict vehicular and pedestrian traffic and vendors on streets
- Operate or contract for the provision of music, news, child-care or parking facilities, and buses, mini-buses or other modes of transportation
- Lease space for sidewalk café tables and chairs
- Provide or contract for the provision of security personnel, equipment or facilities for the protection of property and persons

- Promote business activity, development and retention
- Provide or contract for cleaning, maintenance and other services to public and private property and persons
- Promote tourism, recreational or cultural activities or special events
- Provide refuse collection and disposal services
- Contract for or conduct economic, planning, marketing or other studies

### *Neighborhood Improvement District (NID)*

A Neighborhood Improvement District is a geographically bounded area within which certain public improvements are financed by a city through the issuance of notes or bonds, which are in turn repaid by levying assessments against the property within a NID. NIDs offer distinct advantages in executing economic development for a city and a particular district. Because the city in question issues general obligation bonds, the public improvements associated with the NID can be financed at lower interest rates. Second, a NID can be established and an assessment imposed without a city-wide election. Third, a city may group two or more NID projects together into one bond issue to further reduce financing and project costs. Finally, the NID Act in Missouri allows for a fairly broad range of public improvements to be financed without a requirement that the area be considered to be “blighted” in order to be included in a NID designation.

#### Eligible Improvements and Costs (NID):

Under the Missouri NID Act, eligible improvements and costs may include streets, lighting, parks and recreational facilities, sidewalks, utility service connections, sewer and storm water systems, flood control works, off-street parking structures, bridges, overpasses, tunnels, and “any other public facilities or improvements deemed necessary by the governing body of the city or county”. The NID Act also allows for certain incidental costs to be financed, such as land acquisition and engineering, legal, and financing fees and costs. The act also carries provisions for maintenance of the public improvements during the term of bonds or notes pertaining to the improvements. NIDs can be established by either 1) a petition of at least two-thirds of the owners of record of all of the real property located within the proposed NID district, or 2) by the City submitting a question to all qualified voters residing within the proposed NID at a general or special election called for the purpose of approving bonds associated with the NID.

NIDs carry some distinct advantages compared to TIF in Missouri. Whereas TIF is financed by limited obligation bonds, the full faith and credit general obligation bonds issued as part of NID deals allow for lower interest rates. Whereas TIF requires a blight designation for the affected district or area, NIDs do not carry such requirements. Another distinction between NID and TIF is that, in the case of TIF, property owners or developers do not pay anything initially for the publicly financed improvements but are ultimately responsible to the bondholders if the tax revenue generated by the improvements is insufficient to make the payments. In contrast, in a NID, property owners pay upfront for public improvements through assessments over and above any property or sales taxes they already pay, but the municipality is ultimately responsible to the bondholders if property owners are unable to make the necessary payments.

### *Enhanced Enterprise Zones (EEZs)*

The Enhanced Enterprise Zone Tax Benefit Program, sponsored by the Missouri Department of Economic Development, provides various tax credits to new or expanding businesses in a Missouri Enhanced Enterprise Zone. These zones are specific geographic areas designated by local governments that must be certified by the Department of Economic Development. The program offers state tax credits, accompanied by local real property tax abatements, to eligible businesses in the EEZ. To receive the tax credits, a business facility must provide for two new employees and \$100,000 in new investments (in the case of a new or expanded business facility), or two new employees and \$1 million in new investment (in the case of a replacement business facility). Companies receiving EEZ tax credits must provide health insurance to all full time employees in Missouri to qualify for the program. Eligible investment expenditures include the original cost of machinery, equipment, furniture, fixtures, land and buildings, and or eight times the annual rental rate paid for these items. Ineligible businesses for the EEZ program include gambling establishments, retail trade entities, educational services entities, religious organizations, public administration entities (governments), and food and drinking places.

### *Tax Increment Financing (TIF)*

TIF allows the use of a portion (the increase from the date the district is established) of local property and sales taxes to assist in the funding of redevelopment of certain designated areas in a community. Areas identified for TIF must be deemed to be part of a “blighted,” “conservation” or an “economic development” area. TIF essentially uses the additional sales tax revenue that is generated above and beyond the current level of revenue, as a result of a redevelopment, to fund a variety of project costs. Eligible project cost categories include professional services, land acquisition, rehabilitation of buildings, new infrastructure, and relocation of existing businesses or residents.

### *Chapter 353 Tax Abatement*

The State of Missouri offers a Chapter 353 Tax Abatement as an incentive that can be used by cities to encourage the redevelopment of blighted areas by providing real property tax abatements. Under this program, an “Urban Redevelopment Corporation” must be organized pursuant to the Urban Redevelopment Corporations Law in the state of Missouri and the area designated for tax abatements must be deemed a “blighted area” under state law. Under the program, tax abatements are available for up to 25 years. During the first 10 years, the property is not subject to real property taxes, except in the amount of real property taxes assessed on the land, exclusive of improvements. During the next 15 years, the real property may be assessed up to 50 percent of its true value. Payments in lieu of taxes (PILOTs) may be imposed on the Urban Redevelopment Corporation by contract with the city. PILOTs are paid on an annual basis to replace all or part of the real estate taxes that are abated.

In areas that are challenged by economic decline or blight, the Chapter 353 provisions provide an additional tool for local governments to provide incentives for economic redevelopment.

## *Sales Tax Reimbursement Agreements*

The Sales Tax Reimbursement agreements can be used as a funding mechanism to fund infrastructure associated with new developments. Under these agreements, municipalities have the ability to annually appropriate the increase in sales taxes created by new private capital investment to offset a portion of project investment costs. Under this type of agreement, a portion of city sales taxes captured from the increased sales generated by the project would be reimbursed to the developer or company for eligible expenses. This provision, then, helps to provide an incentive for redevelopment or new development.

The state has laid out a number of criteria that must be followed or satisfied to allow for a Sales Tax Reimbursement Agreement.

- The applicant must demonstrate that the project would prevent a significant loss in existing sales tax revenue or make a significant contribution to the overall health and wellbeing of the local economy.
- The project must show a clear demonstration of the public purpose and the economic benefit provided through the agreement and how the agreement would further the city's economic development goals.
- The application must show that the project would not occur "but for" the incentives offered. The incentive should make a difference in determining the decision of the particular business to expand or remain in the city and it must be proven that this would not have otherwise occurred without the availability of the sales tax reimbursement.
- The firm that would benefit from the sales tax reimbursement must show its financial stability and capacity to complete the project.
- The application must ensure that the city or any other taxing jurisdiction affected by the incentive is not receiving less total sales tax revenue from the property than was received prior to the granting of the sales tax reimbursement provision.
- The sales tax reimbursement is generally not allowed to extend for greater than ten years.

## *Additional Funding Sources for Greenways*

In addition to the normal tools in Missouri such as NIDs, CIDs, TDDs, and TIFs, the City of Grain Valley may wish to consider additional funding strategies identified to provide for greenway enhancements (such as a potential greenway improvement along Sni-A-Bar Creek as discussed in this document). These additional strategies may include but not be limited to the following:

### *Bond Referendums for Greenways*

Communities across the nation have successfully placed on local ballots propositions to support greenway development, ranging from small towns to larger cities. For example, a few years ago residents in Casper, Wyoming passed a greenway bond referendum to provide for the first three miles of a local greenway.

**Greenway Trust Fund** Many communities around the country have created trust funds for land acquisition and facility development. A trust fund may help in acquiring parcels that would otherwise be lost if not acquired by private sector initiative.

### *Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)*

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides states with annual direct grants that are then awarded to local communities in part for park and greenway projects.

### *Development Strategies*

The City of Grain Valley may wish to stimulate redevelopment of particular parcels or focus areas through one of the following strategies:

#### ***Joint Public / Private Development Opportunities***

The City could contribute any publicly owned parcels along the corridor to a joint development deal with one or more private landowners to assemble and launch a redevelopment project at a particular location along the corridor. The city could also contribute equity in the form of cash to a joint public private partnership to promote redevelopment in the community.

#### ***Public Investment***

Beyond the overall cost of public improvements on public property or along public right of ways, the City may wish to facilitate development on private parcels by providing for additional capital projects (such as streetscape improvements, parks and other community facilities) for areas or parcels in the community. The City may also assist private development projects by providing for the operations or maintenance of various improvements (such as streetscape features).

#### ***Property Assembly***

The City could help the private sector overcome one of the biggest hurdles to redevelopment – property assembly. By either quietly or proactively buying key parcels in redevelopment areas and then helping to facilitate redevelopment deals that involve these particular parcels, the City can help to jump start redevelopment at various locations along the corridor.

#### ***Regulatory Changes***

The City could help to facilitate redevelopment by helping to alter or streamline regulations such as zoning, design guidelines, parking ratios, and other regulations.

### ***Impact Fee Reduction and Permitting Incentives***

Some of the desired outcomes of this plan are to achieve a higher quality built environment, to and provide sufficient public open space. The City could attract developers to implement many of the goals outlined in this Plan by reducing or waiving fees and processes that a proposed development would normally need to go through to receive permits. For example, the City charges developers impact fees for utilities and park dedication fees. The City could establish certain standards for which new developments that meet these new standards could receive a credit or relief from fee rates. Ideally, the reduction in fees or related costs for a developer would be related to a particular standard. For example, installing xeriscaping could earn reduced water utility fees and creating publicly accessible open space could earn a waiver of park fees. In addition, developments proposing to meet desired standards could be offered streamlined or accelerated permit approvals.

### **Plan Exceptions**

Conformance with the policies of this plan is a positive finding required for most land use applications.

Flexibility in plan policies should be provided, however, for unique or extraordinary proposals or parcels, and to accommodate changing conditions. Important elements in considering the appropriateness of a plan exception are:

1. Public notification requirements as detailed by Grain Valley Unified Development Code have been met.
2. All other potentially impacted homeowners, businesses, entities, and governing agencies have also received notice of the proposal.
3. The applicant has identified all potential conflicts and the measures that will be taken to resolve or mitigate all potential impacts; and
4. Relevant and germane opposition to the proposal has been adequately and appropriately addressed.

The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council may approve exceptions for unique or extraordinary situations that were not anticipated when the Plan was adopted so long as the proposal is clearly in the public interest and generally meets the spirit and intent of the goals and policies of the Plan.

## Plan Amendments

The Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan should articulate a long-term vision for the community. Many decisions and investments will be made over time based on the direction of this plan. Therefore, it should not change subjectively or capriciously, but be a compass for the future. This plan is not a static document and is expected to change as conditions, attitudes and expectations evolve over time. Plan amendments are periodic, substantive changes to the Plan and its related goals, policies, and actions along with changes to the Preferred Land Use Vision that are necessary to accommodate changed or unexpected circumstances in a manner consistent with the public interest.

The process for amending the Plan is as follows:

1. A meeting is attended by Planning Department staff and the author of the amendment (if instigated by landowner or interested citizen).
2. Public notice is posted.
3. Planning Department Staff writes the application (or analyzes the application written by others). Consideration shall be given to the following:
  - The need for the proposed change;
  - The effect of the proposed change on the need for City services and facilities;
  - The implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the Plan; and
  - A description and analysis of unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (such as a significant economic development opportunity).
4. Planning and Zoning Commission holds a public hearing(s) and makes a recommendation.
5. City Council holds a public hearing(s) and makes a decision regarding the amendment.
6. The Plan is amended and recorded.

The following deviations shall not be considered to require a public Plan amendment process. As such, these exceptions may be considered administratively and are not subject to the public hearing process.

- Emergency situations requiring immediate actions or development approvals necessary to protect public health, safety or welfare, as determined by the City Council; or
- Corrections of errors, clarifications of intent, and updating of data that do not alter the substance or intent of Plan policies or actions.

### *Regular Amendments*

Annually, as part of the CIP process, the Grain Valley Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed. Plan amendments may be recommended by the staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, City Council or other appropriate board or commission, and adopted by City Council. Specific annual budget priorities, as may be adopted separately by the City Council, should be consistent with the adopted Plan.

Every five years, the Plan should be reviewed by City Staff, the Planning and Zoning Commission and an appointed community group or groups to ensure Plan goals and policies are still timely and appropriate. Such review will also serve as an overview of any policy

changes or plan exceptions that may have taken place. The revision process shall include the following:

- Updating of the Plan statistical data documenting growth trends, completed projects and other factors experienced since the adoption of the current Plan;
- Preparation of an Evaluation and Appraisal Report, documenting Plan effectiveness and implementation efforts, identifying constraints upon implementation, and summarizing trends and challenges that have emerged or changed in the period since Plan adoption;
- Revision of goals, strategies, and actions to reflect changing circumstances, emerging needs and opportunities, and expressed citizen priorities; and
- Revisions to the Preferred Land Use Vision and other related maps.

### *Requested Amendments*

Occasionally a plan amendment will be requested by a landowner, interested citizen or other. These requests shall be heard within 30 days of receiving a complete Comprehensive Plan Amendment application. There are two levels of amendments:

### *Major Amendments*

Major amendments alter the intent and outcomes of the Comprehensive Plan. They are substantive departures from the publicly endorsed plan as adopted. These amendments include:

- Changes to the intent of the plan
- Changes to the Preferred Land Use Vision
- Changes to the Thoroughfare Plan
- Changes to the Goals, Policies, or Actions
- Increase or decrease in development intensity by more than 10 percent

In the case of a Major Amendment, the full amendment process must be followed.

### *Minor Amendments*

All other changes are minor amendments and may be dealt with at the staff level. The same considerations apply – a) The need for the proposed change; b) The effect of the proposed change on the need for City services and facilities; c) The implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the Plan; and d) Analysis of unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (such as a significant economic development opportunity).

Once a decision has been reached by staff, it will be placed on the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council agendas as a consent item.

### *Plan Monitoring*

If a Plan is to have value and remain constructive over time, it is imperative to monitor progress on its many recommendations. Comprehensive planning should be thought of as an ongoing process and not as a one-time event. The Plan is not an end in itself, but rather the foundation that will guide ongoing, more detailed planning. Without the evaluation and feedback loop, the Plan can soon become out of date. For this reason, the Plan must be structured to respond to changing needs and conditions.



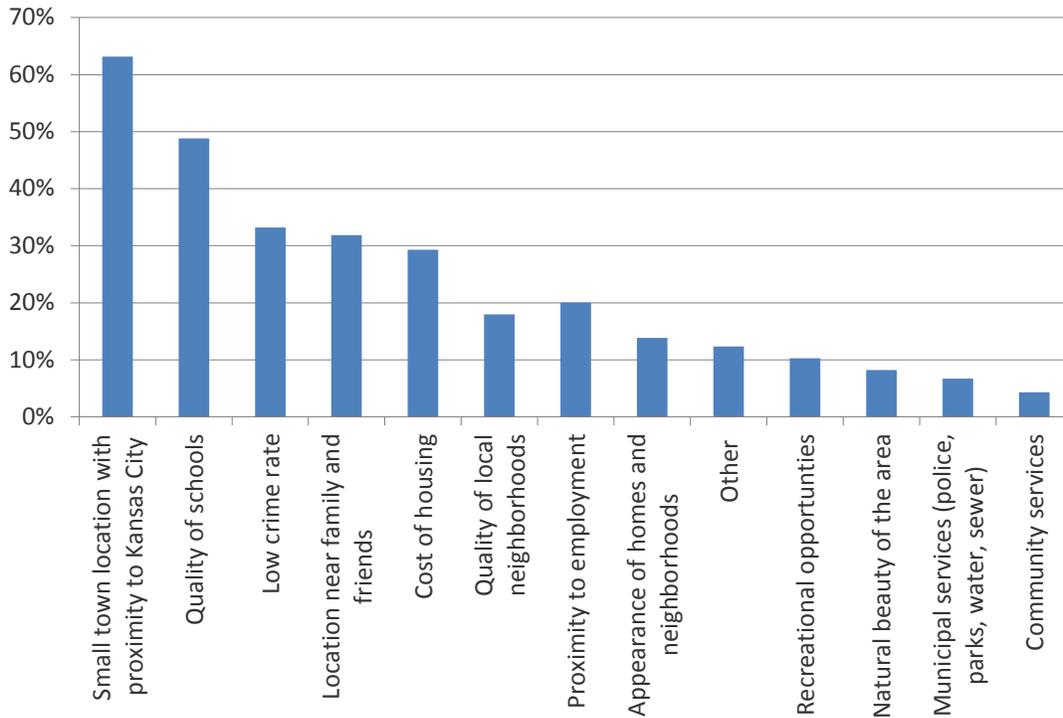
# Appendix

# Online Community Survey Results

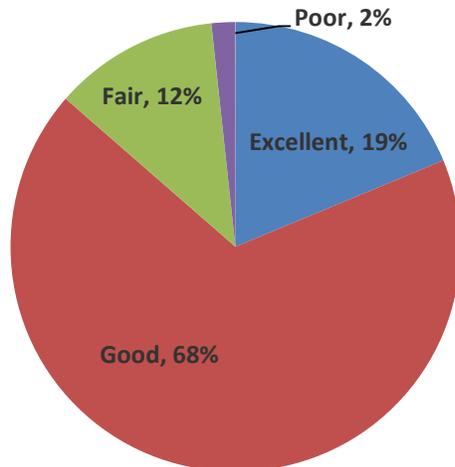
At the beginning of the comprehensive plan update process, Design Workshop and the City of Grain Valley developed a collection of survey questions to ask the community in order to get initial feedback on the changes that citizens would like to see in the community. The survey was available online from October 22, 2013 - February 18, 2014 and was advertised in various manners by the City of Grain Valley. The following charts and graphs represent the results of that survey.

Online Community Survey - October 22, 2013 - February 18, 2014. N = 584 respondents

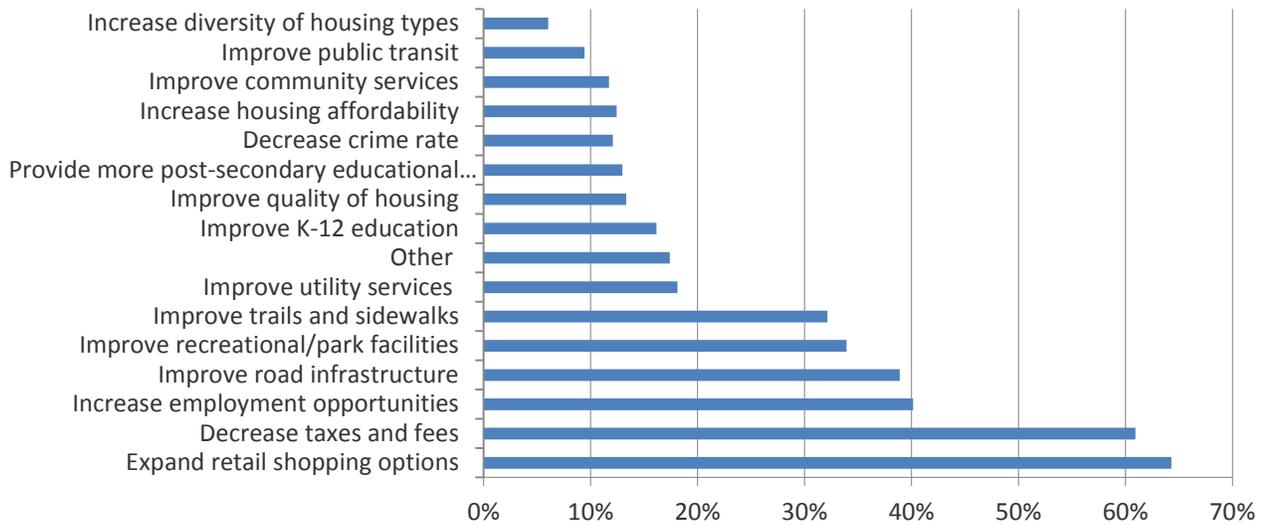
## Q1. What are the three most important reasons you and your family choose to live in Grain Valley?



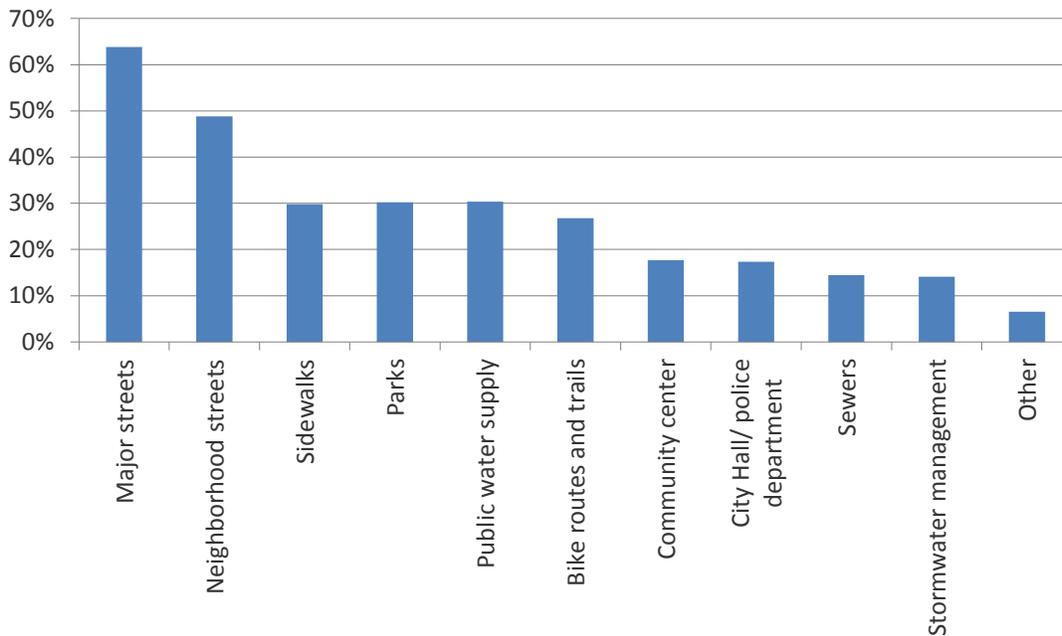
## Q2. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life in Grain Valley?



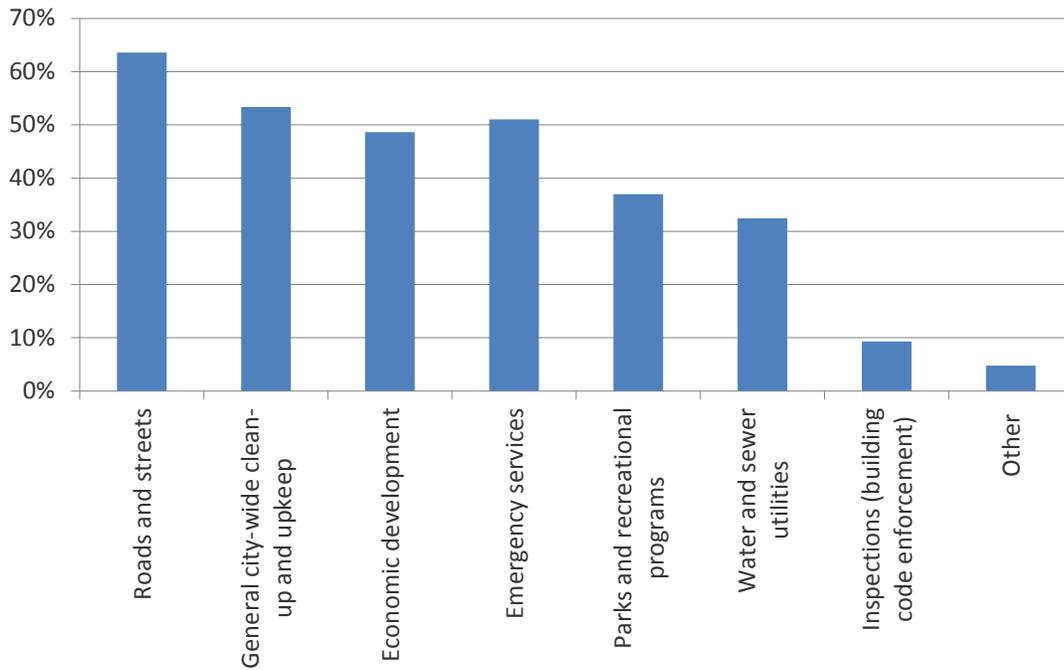
**Q3. Please indicate four changes you think would improve the quality of life in Grain Valley (choose four)**



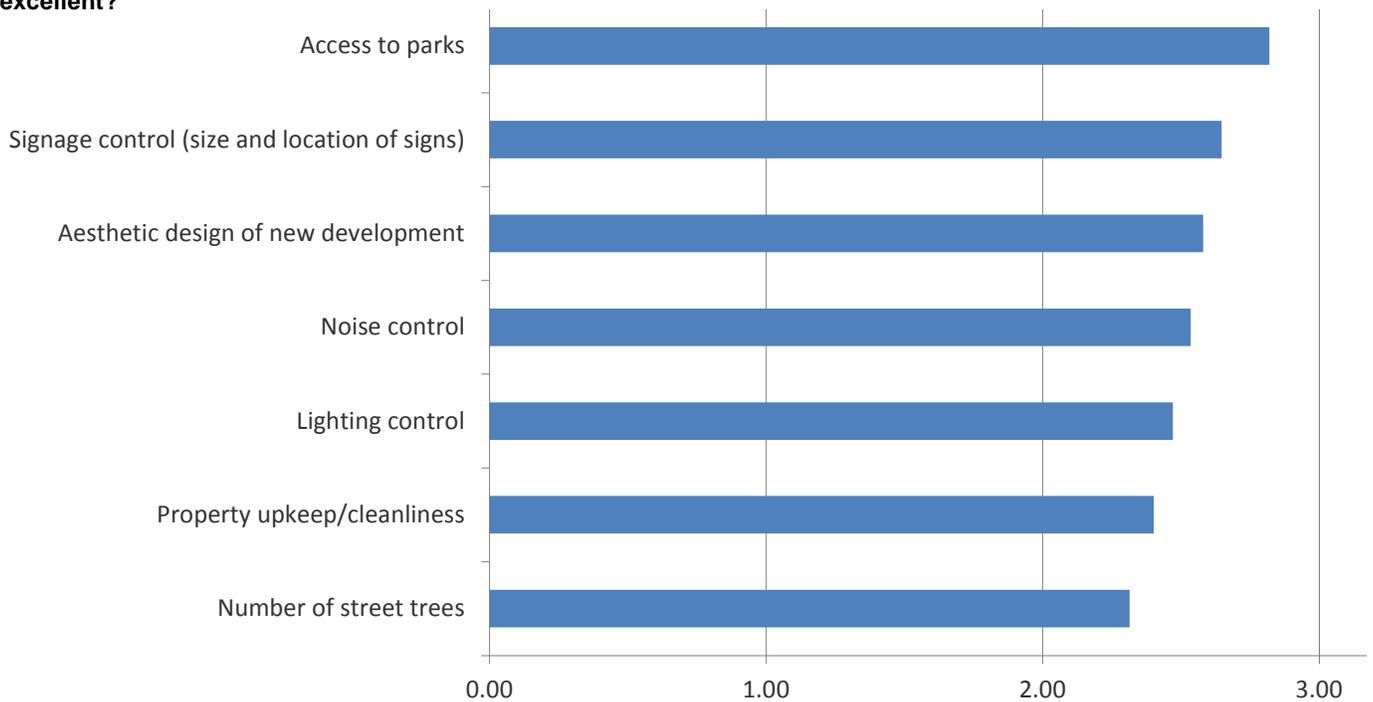
**Q4. The City maintains a wide array of public facilities and infrastructure with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize maintenance and construction investments? (choose your top 3.)**



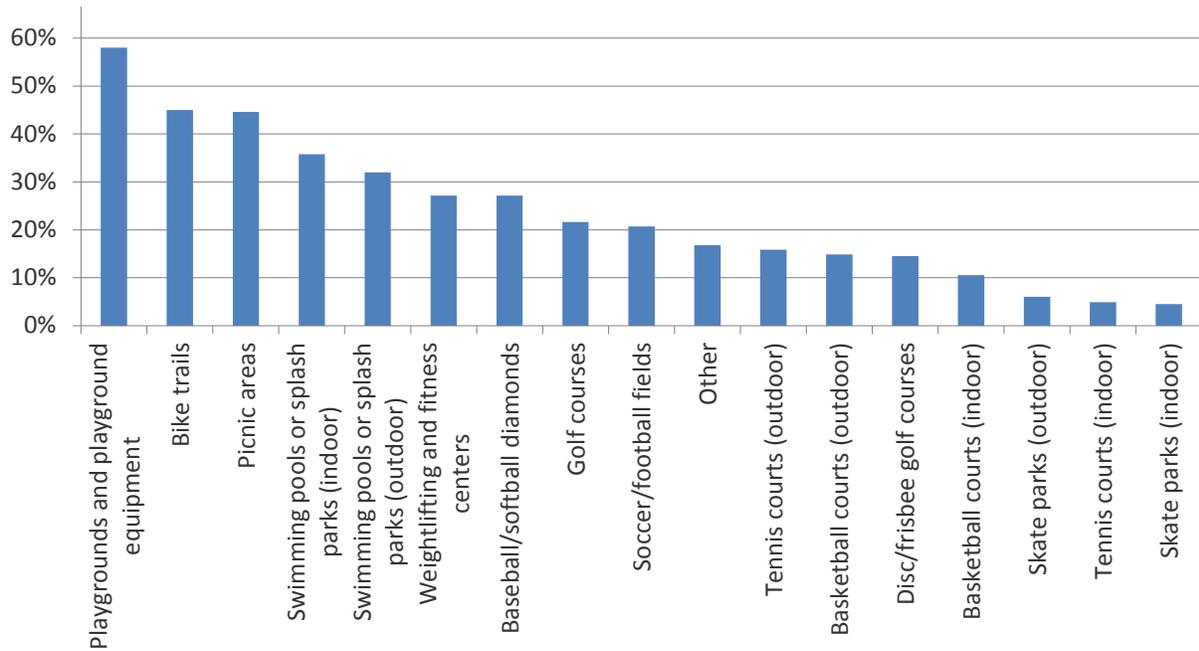
**Q5. The City provides a wide array of services with a limited budget. How would you like the City to prioritize spending for the following city services? (choose 3.)**



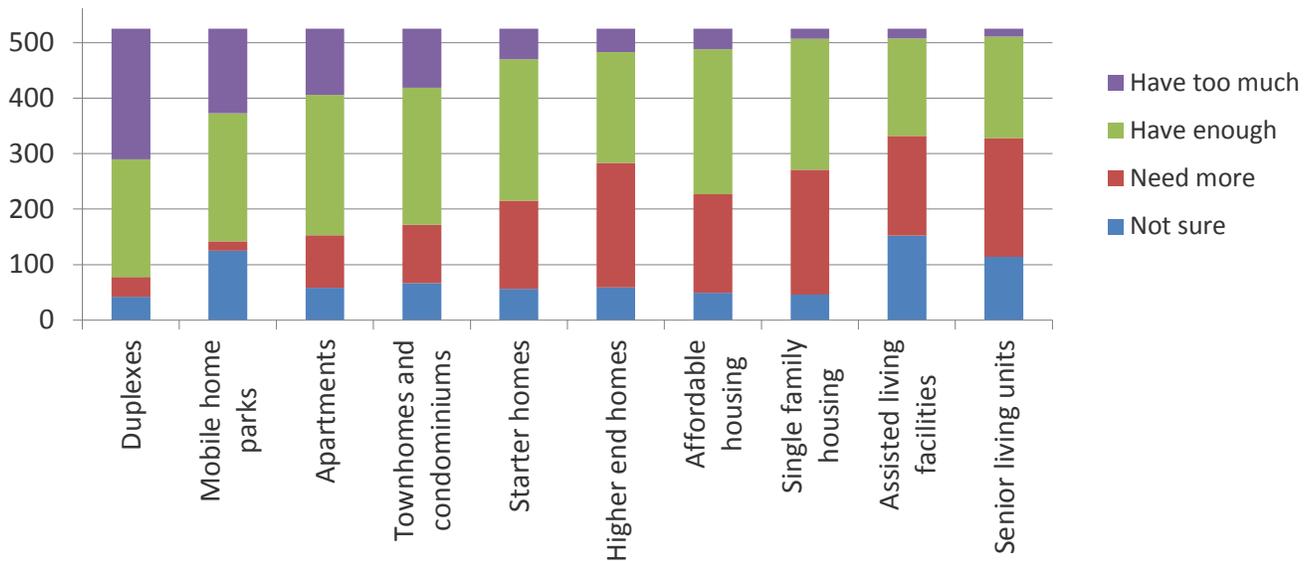
**Q6. How would you rate the following aspects of the City of Grain Valley where 1 is poor, 2 is fair, 3 is good and 4 is excellent?**



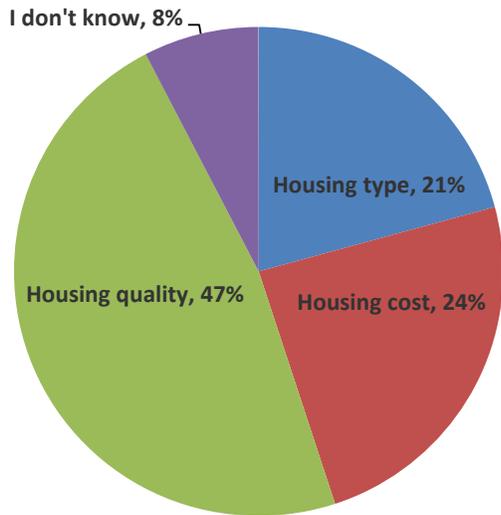
**Q7. Please indicate four types of park/recreation amenities you would like to see expanded or improved in Grain Valley, either by the City or by the private sector. (Choose four.)**



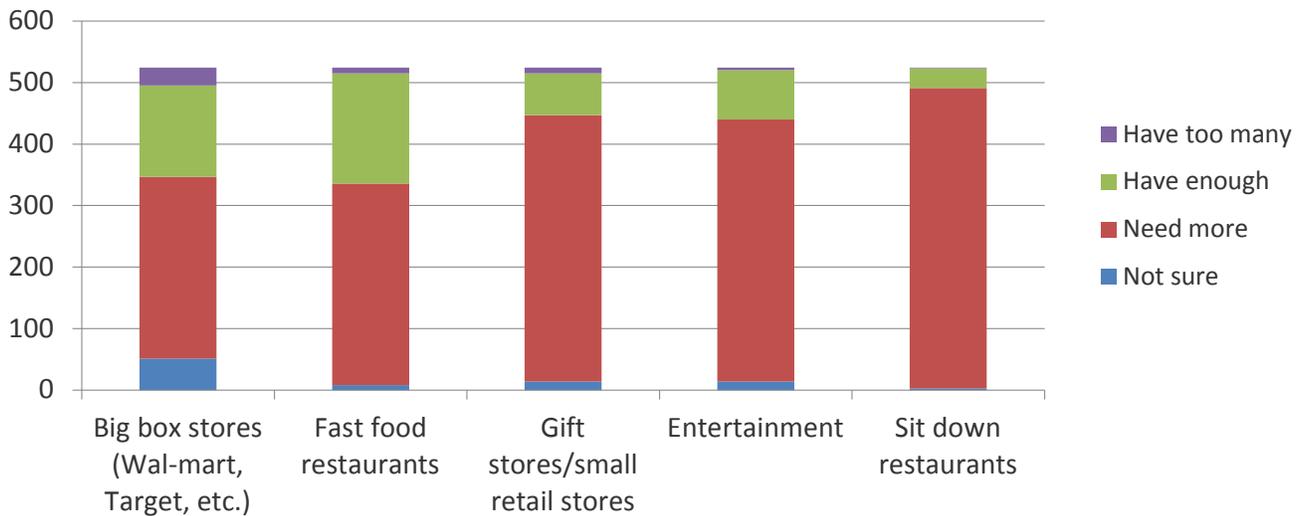
**Q8. Please share your opinion about the supply of various housing types in the City.**



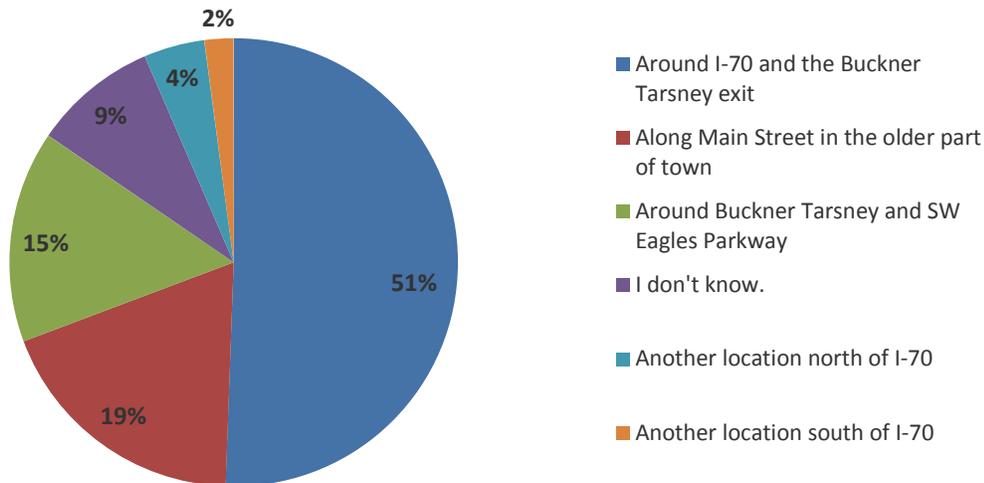
**Q9. Which of the following aspects of housing is most important to improve in the City of Grain Valley?**



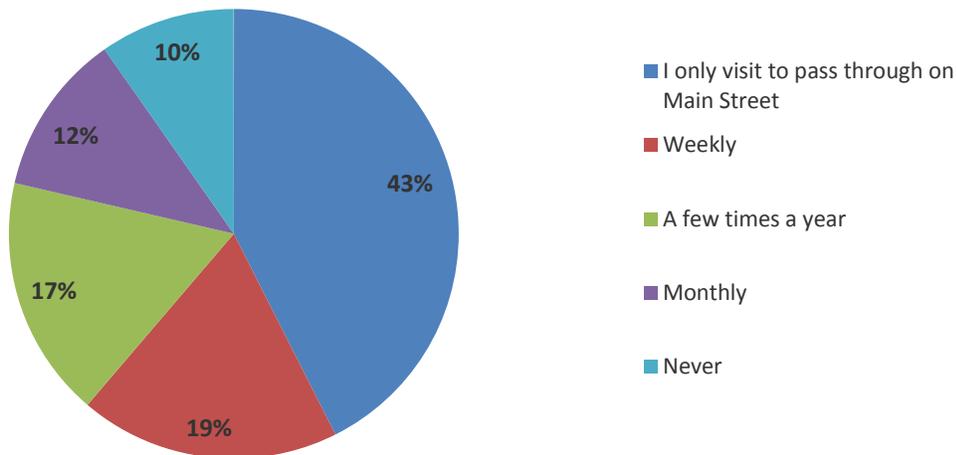
**Q10. Please share your opinion about the supply of retail options in the City.**



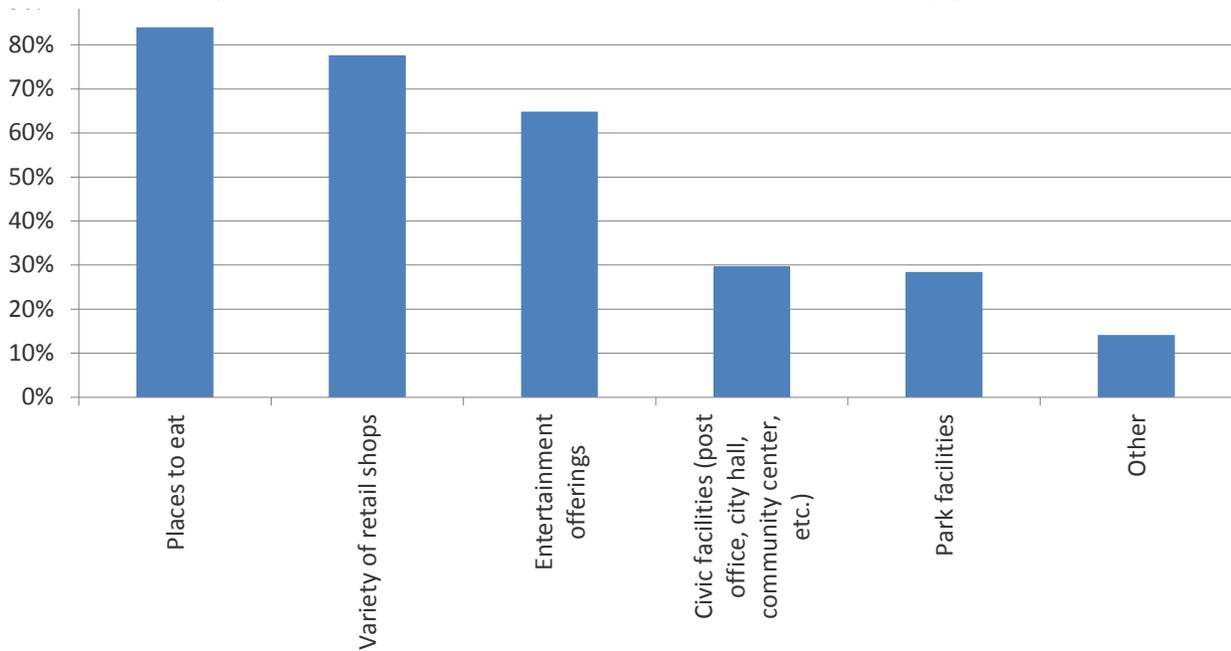
**Q11. Where do you see the "heart" of Grain Valley being in the future?**



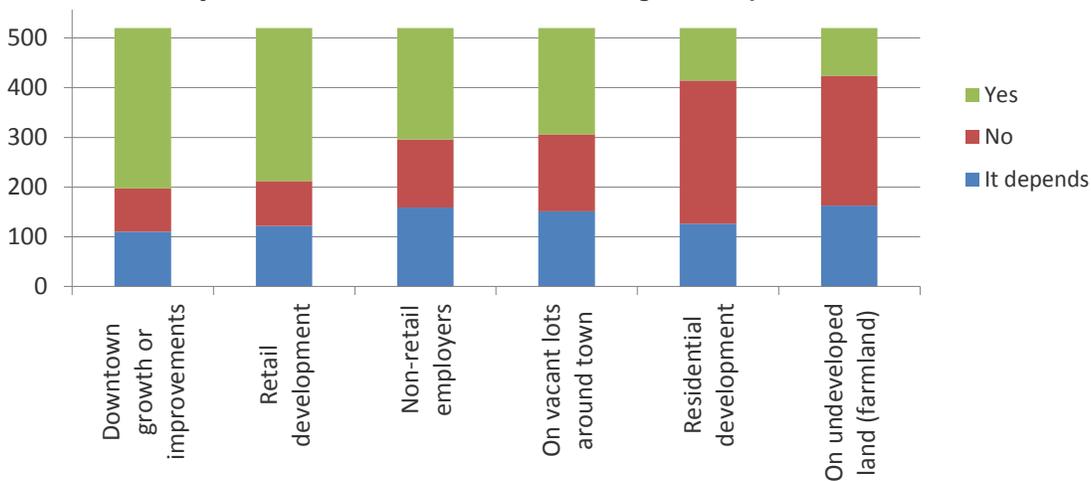
**Q12. How often do you visit the Downtown/Main Street area?**



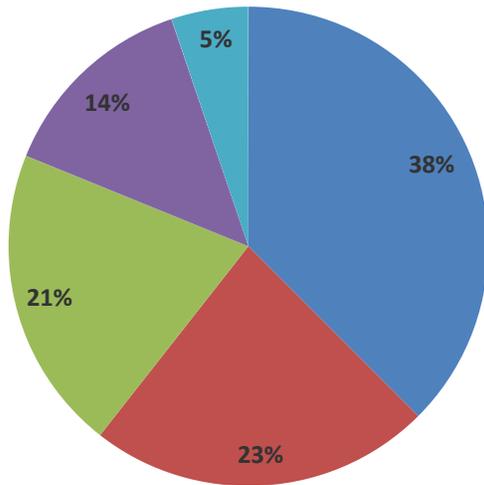
**Q13. What would attract you to visit the Downtown/Main Street area? (Select all that apply.)**



**Q14. Should the city offer financial incentives to encourage development and investment?**

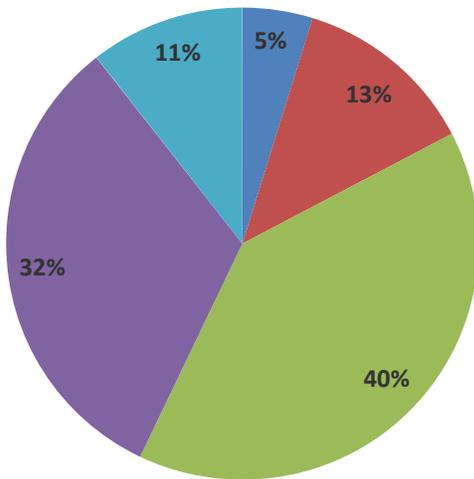


**Q15. How do you see Grain Valley in 20 years?**



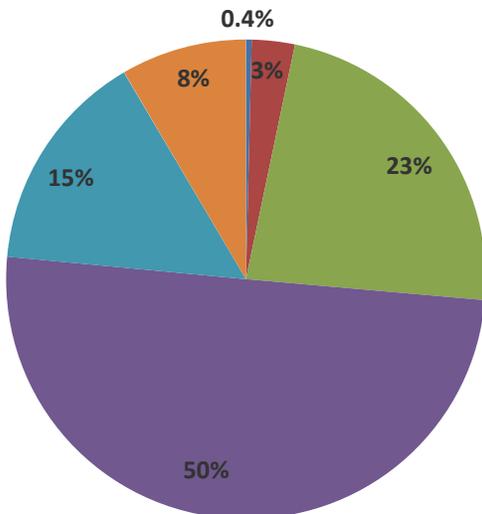
- A growing community retaining its small town flavor
- A significant suburb with a growing employment base
- A slower growing community holding on to its small town perspective
- A commuter town to the Kansas City metro area
- Other

**Q16. The current population of Grain Valley is about 12,000 residents. How big do you see Grain Valley becoming in the next 20 years?**



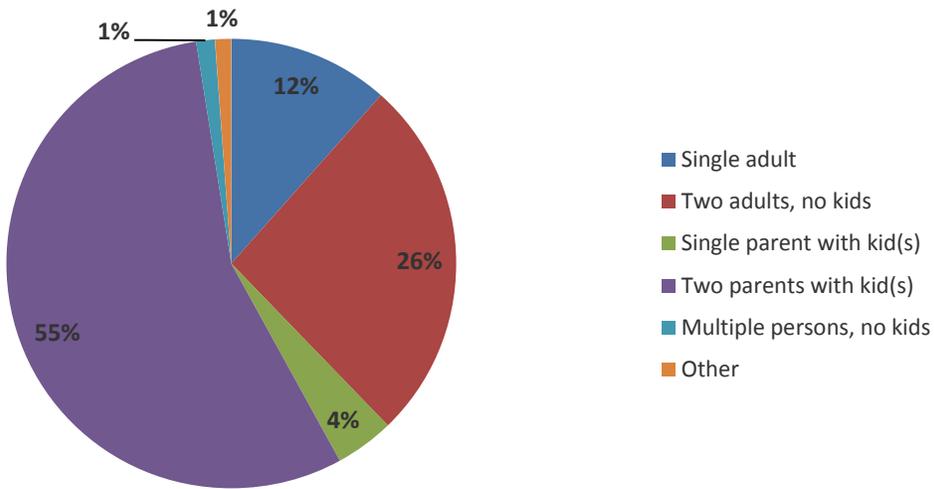
- About the same
- 15,000 residents
- 20,000 residents
- 25,000 residents
- I don't know

**Q17. The following is my current age range**

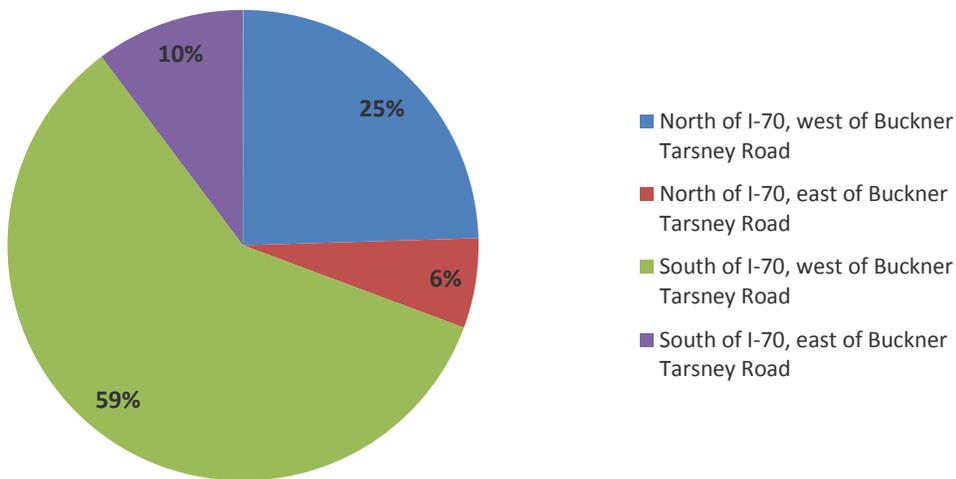


- Under 18
- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-54
- 55-65
- Over 65

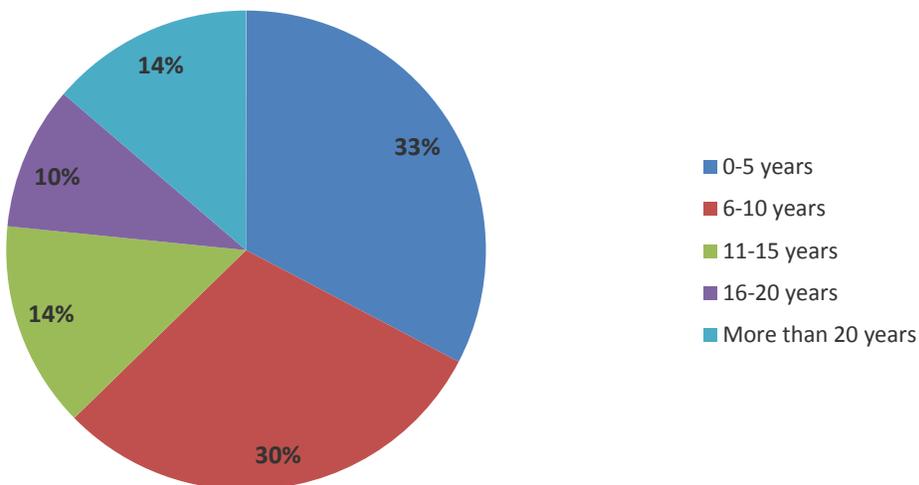
**Q18. Please describe the current living situation in your household**



**Q19. What part of town do you live in?**



**Q20. How long have you lived in Grain Valley?**

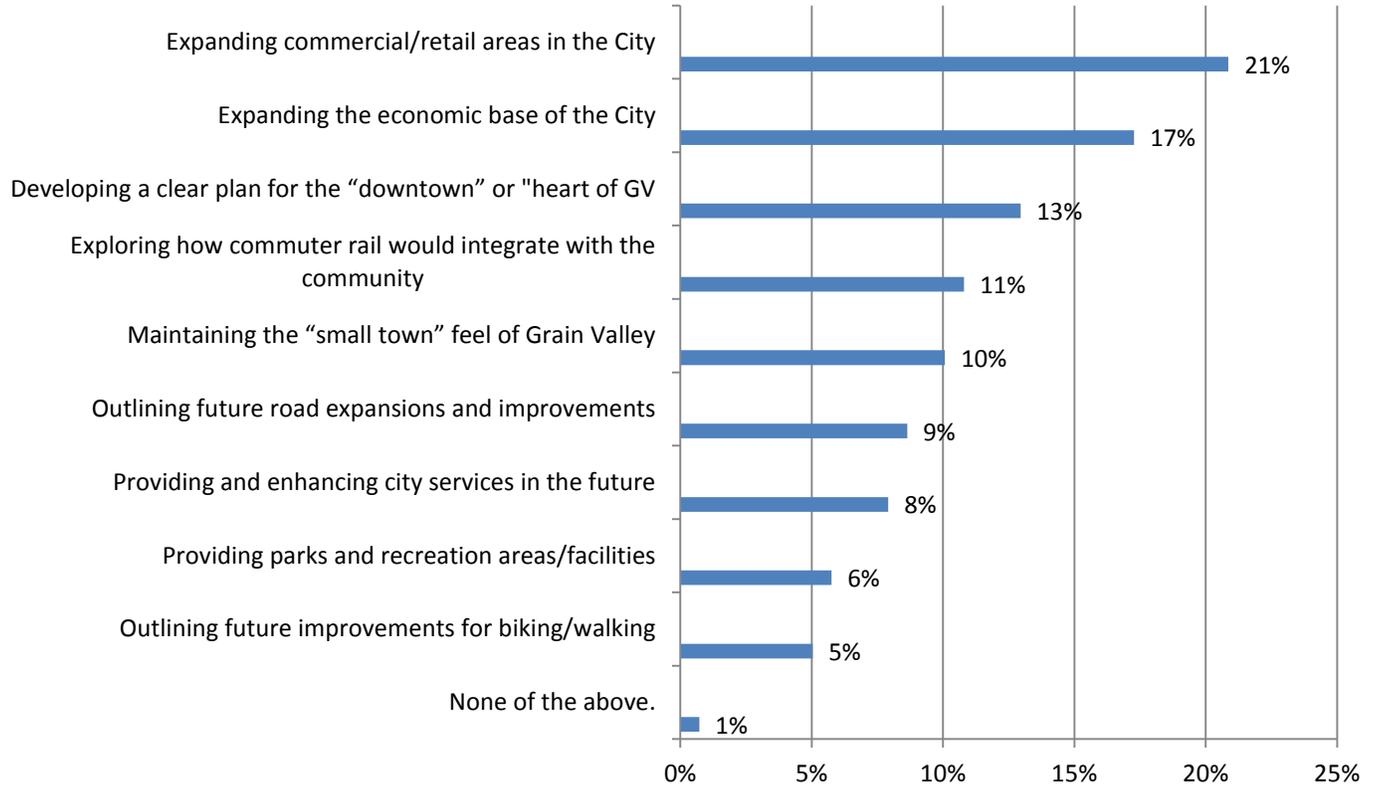


# Public Meeting Keypad Polling and Online Survey Results

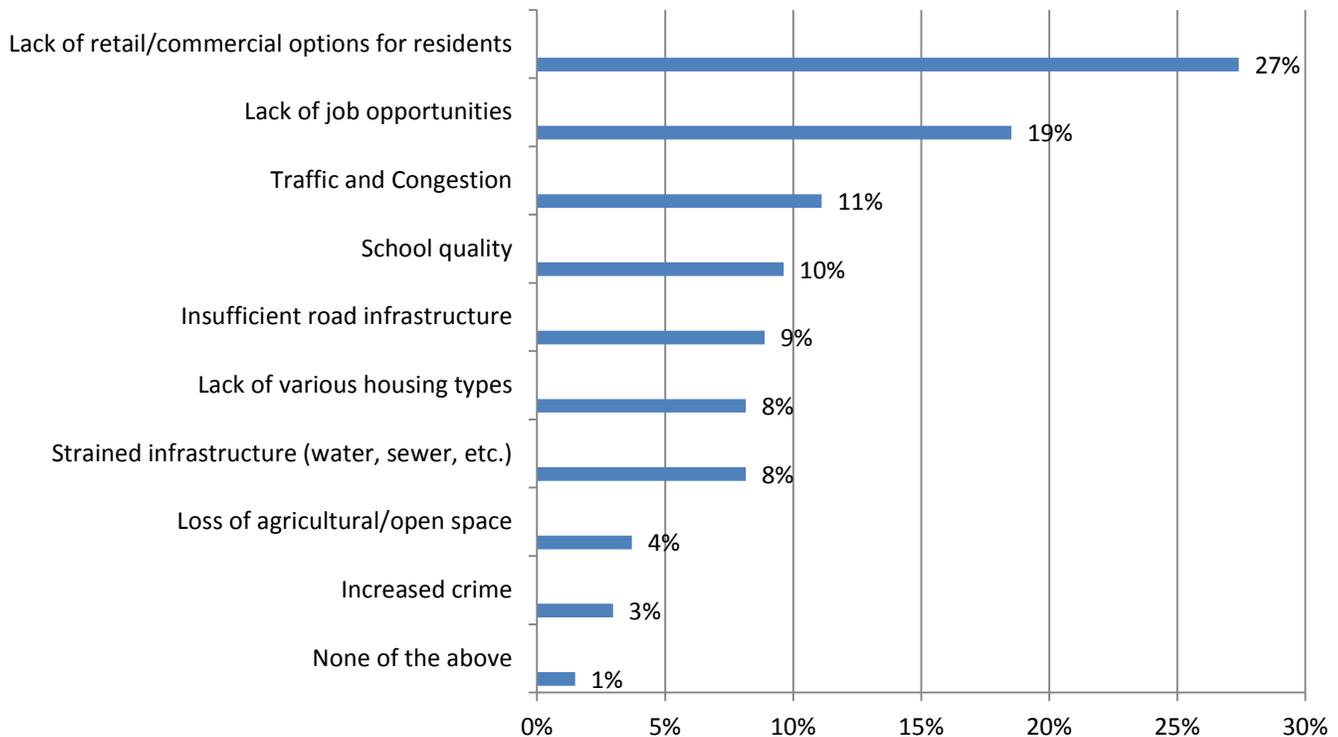
The following tables and charts depict the results of public input collected at the three public meetings held throughout the comprehensive plan update process. Public meeting attendees responded to a set of instant feedback keypad polling questions. The same set of questions was also posted as an online survey for those who could not attend the meeting in person.

## Public Meeting and Online Survey #1 - January 9, 2014. N = 49

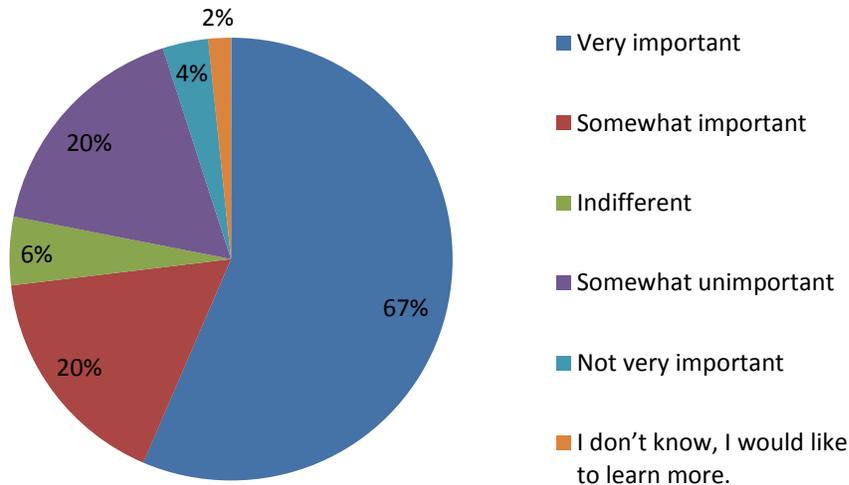
**Q.1 I believe the most important topics to address in the Comprehensive Plan update are: (Choose your top 3.)**



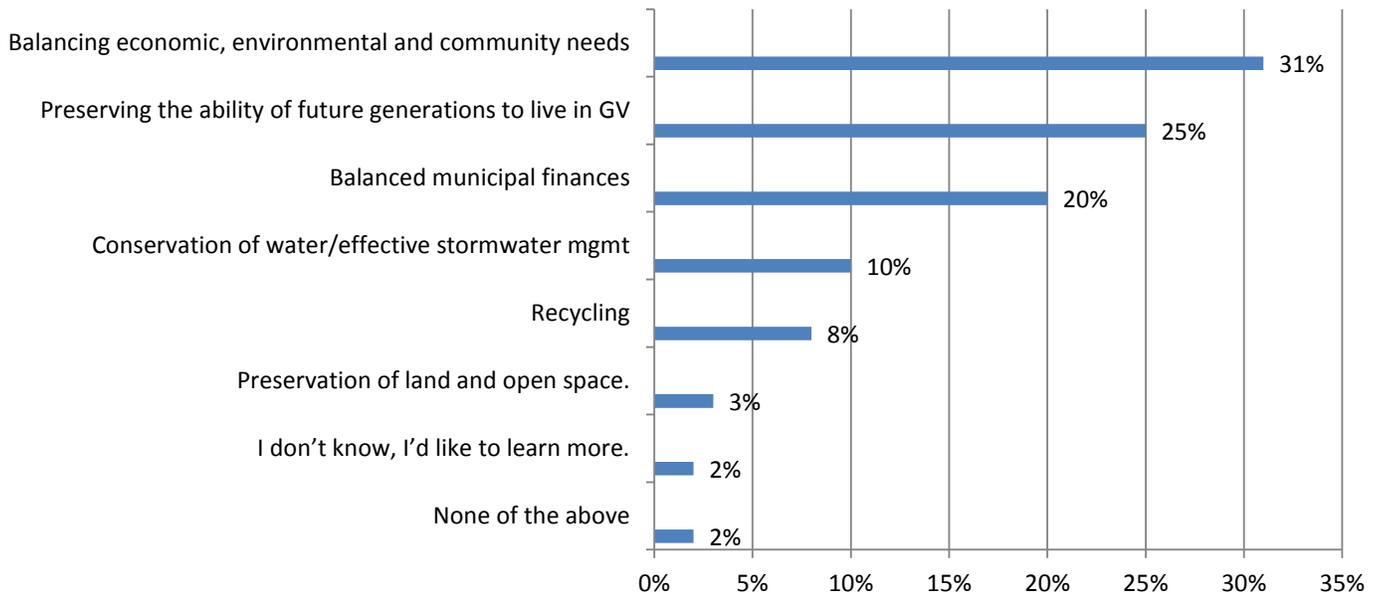
**Q2. Which of the following are your biggest concerns about Grain Valley at this time? (Choose your top 3.)**



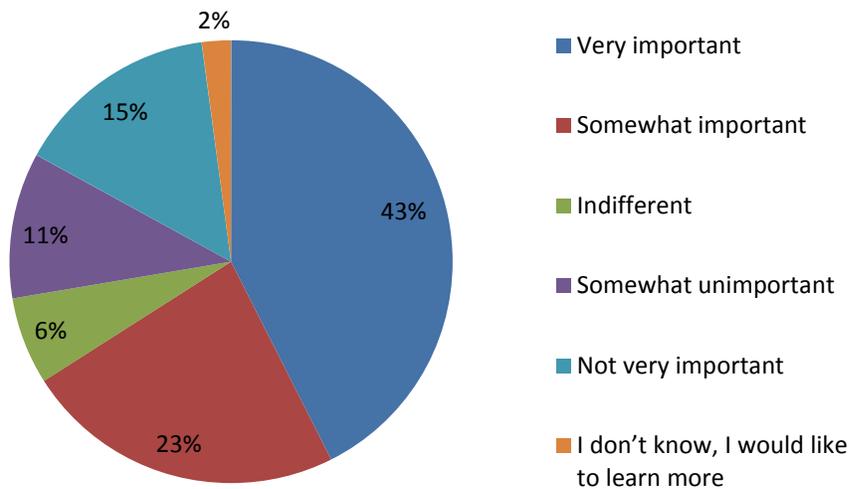
**Q3. How important is it to you that Grain Valley grow “sustainably” over the next 20 years?**



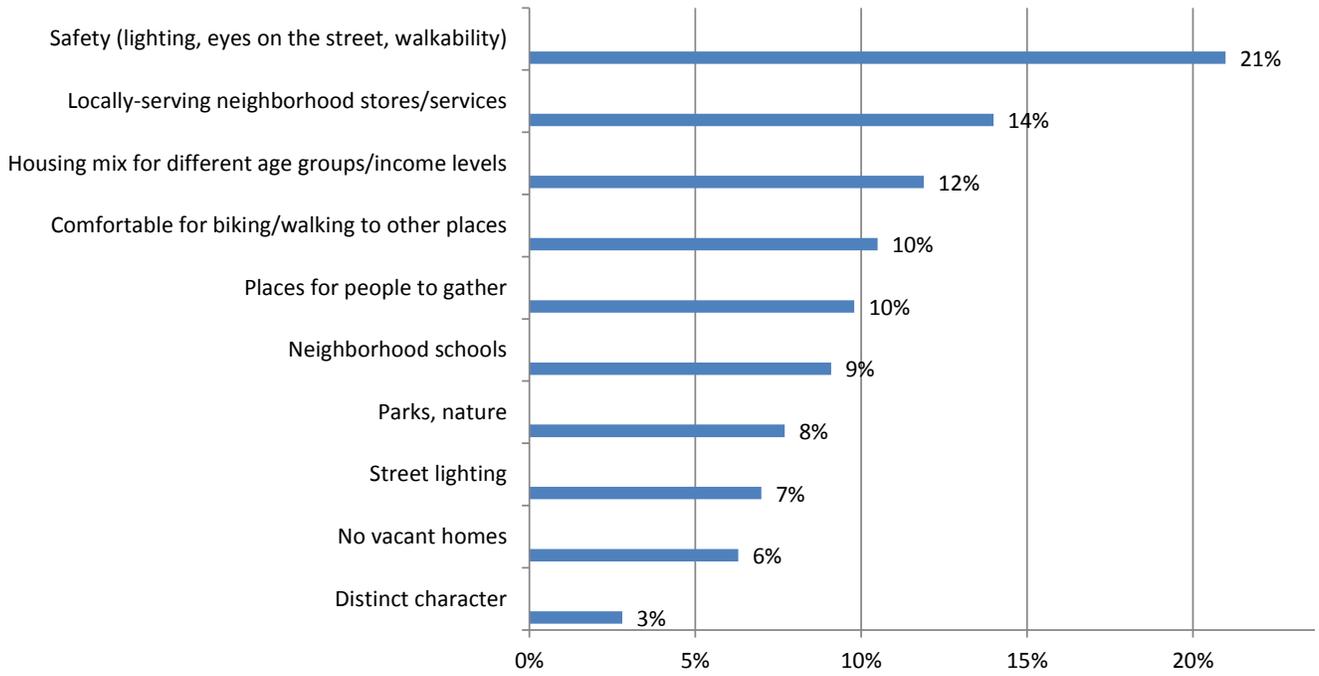
**Q4. What does “growing sustainably” mean to you? (Choose up to 3.)**



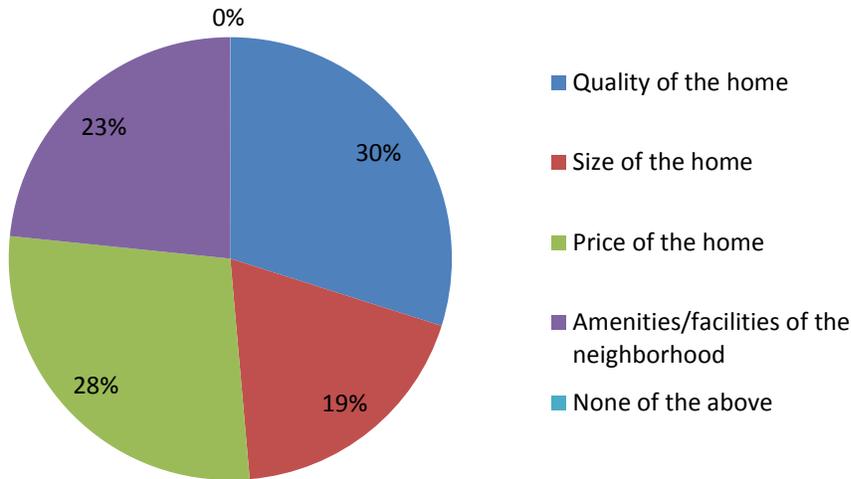
**Q5. How important do you think it is to provide diversity in housing types in the City going forward?**



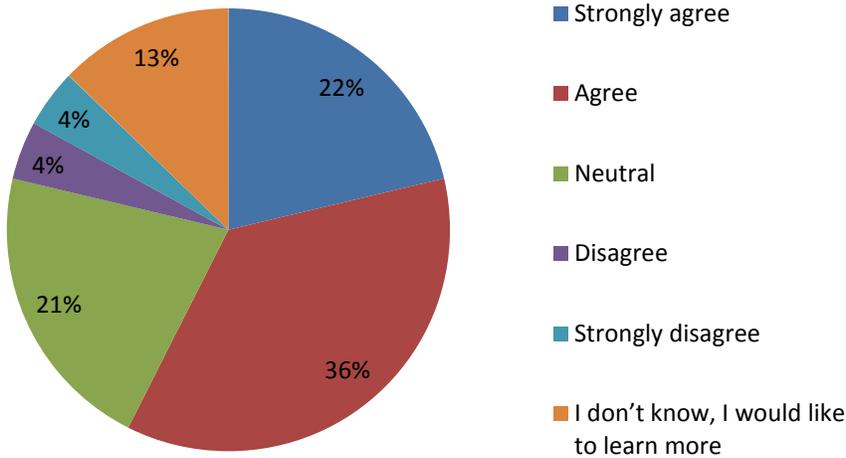
**Q6. Which of these physical elements contribute to strong neighborhoods? (Choose your top 3.)**



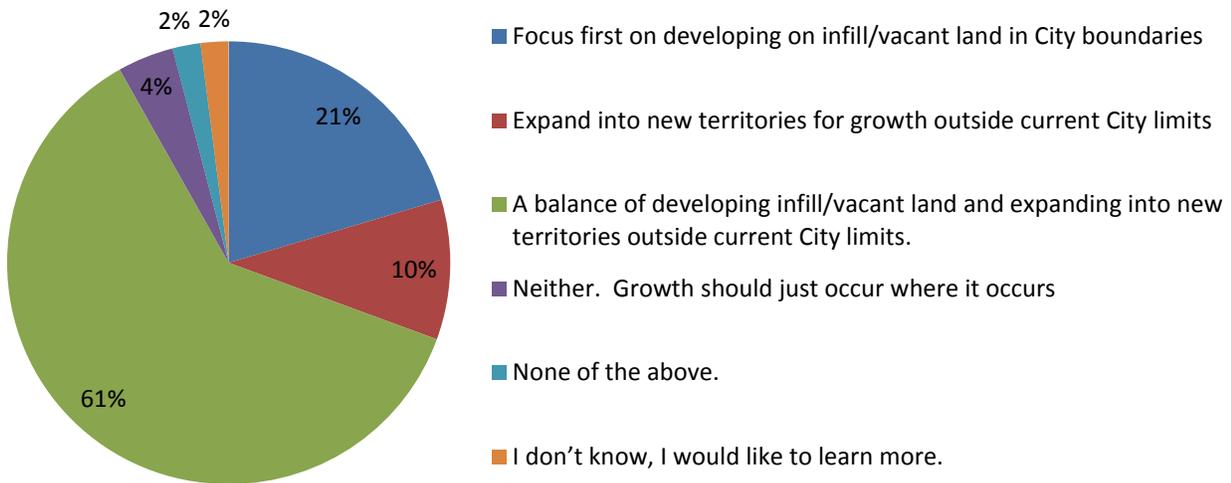
**Q7. How do you evaluate whether a home is considered to be “higher end” in the Grain Valley area? (Choose all that apply)**



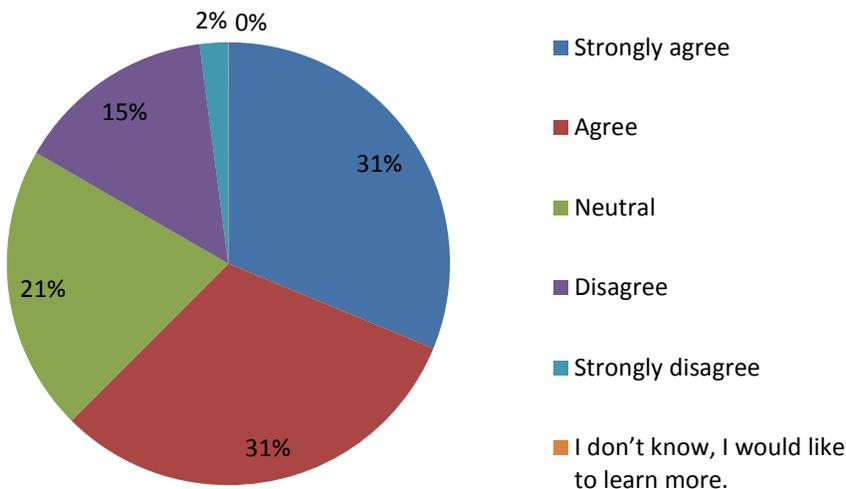
**Q8. Grain Valley should be organized in the future around a set of “centers.”**



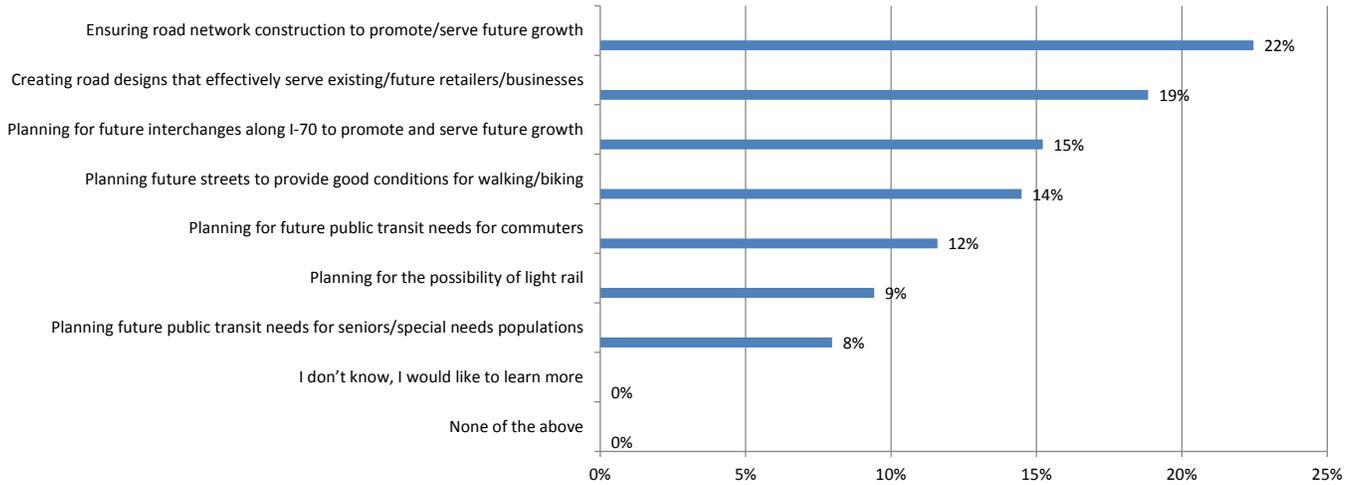
**Q9. In terms of general growth strategy, which of the following do you agree with? (Choose one.)**



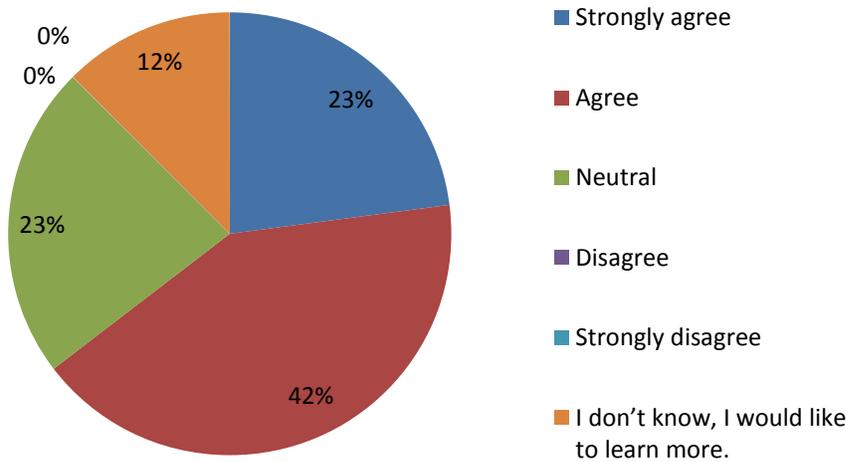
**Q10. Do you agree with the following statement: As it grows, the City should be active in preserving open spaces.**



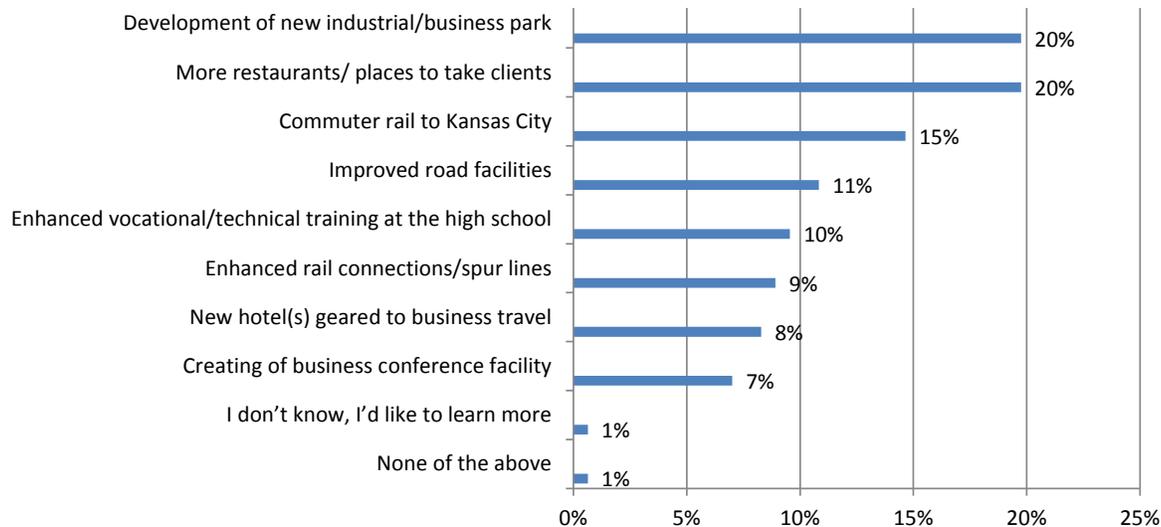
**Q11. Which of the following transportation goals are most important to address in creating an updated comprehensive plan? (Choose up to 3.)**



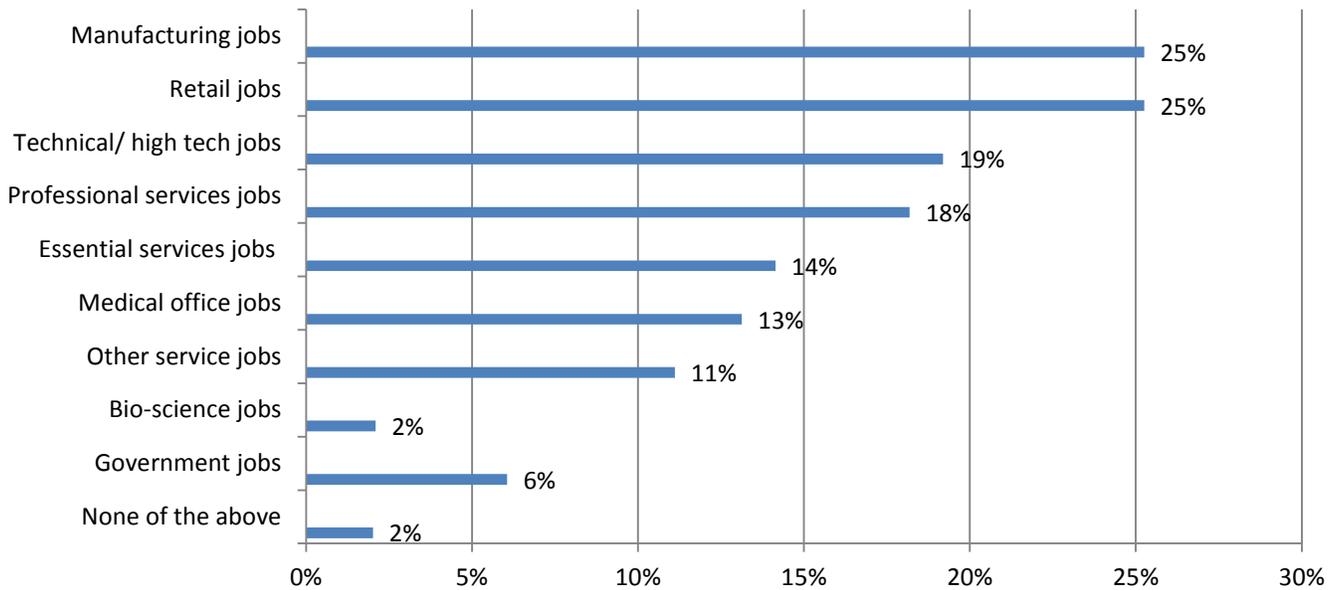
**Q12. Do you agree with this statement: Grain Valley should be developed around a strong hierarchy of street types.**



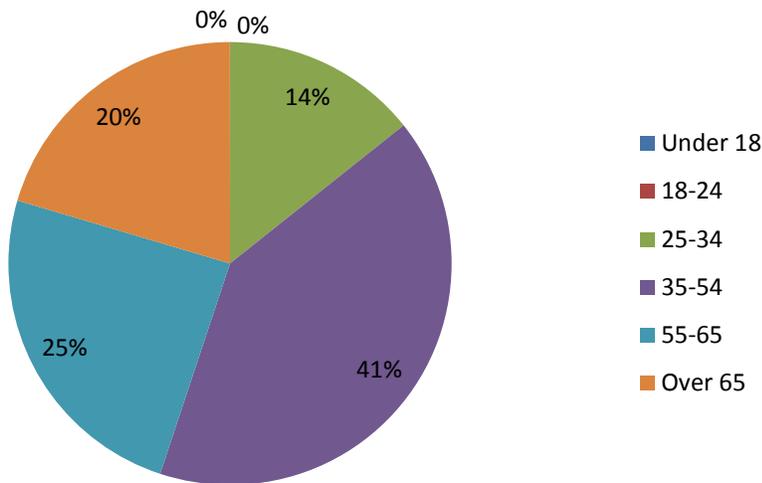
**Q13. Which of the following do you believe would help the most with economic development in Grain Valley? (Choose all that apply.)**



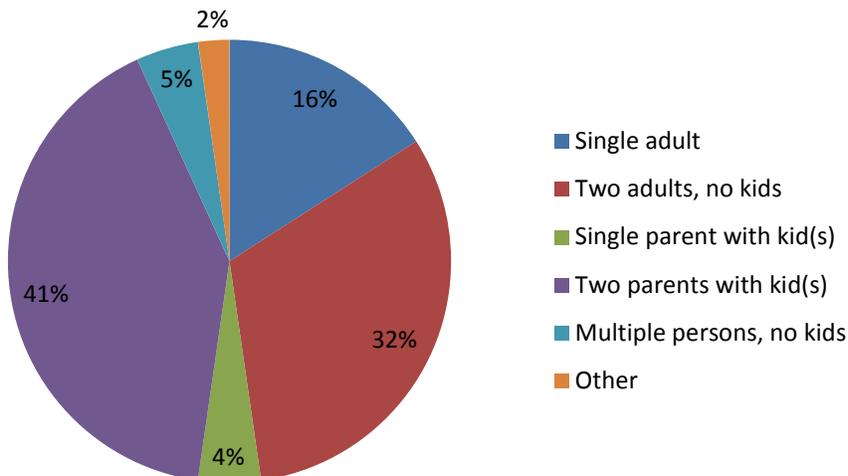
**Q14. In terms of promoting future jobs diversity, Grain Valley should focus on ensuring the growth of the following kinds of jobs: (Choose up to 3.)**



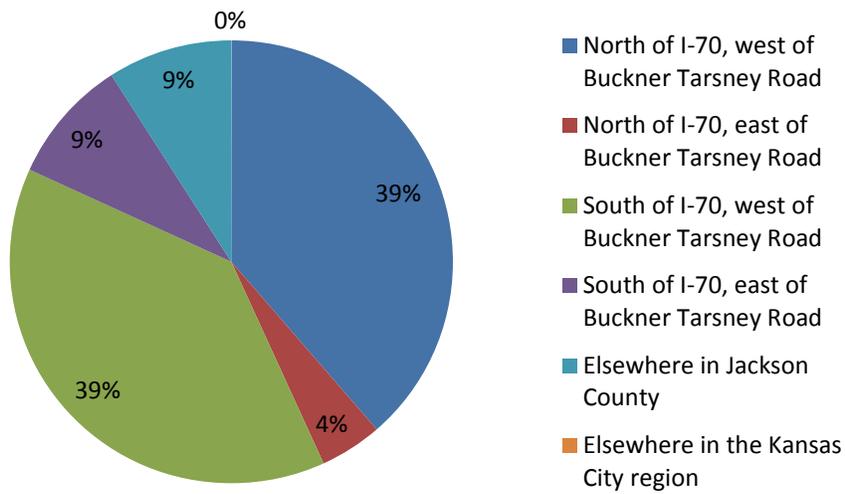
**Q15. The following is my current age range:**



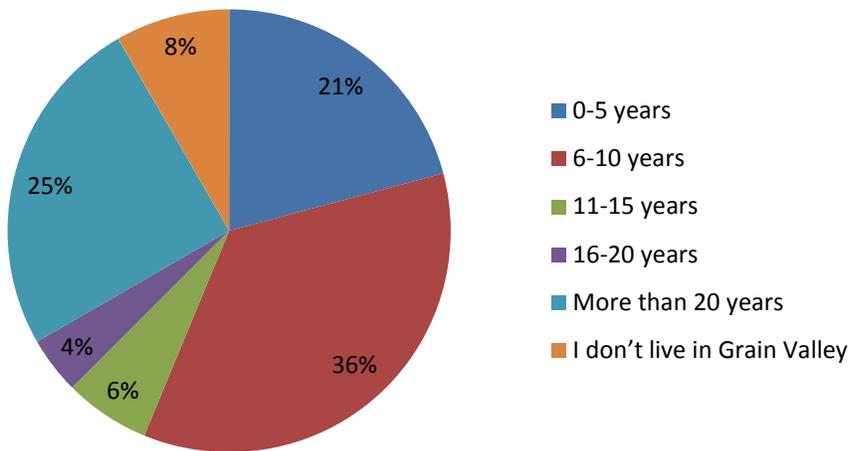
**Q16. Please describe the current living situation in your household:**



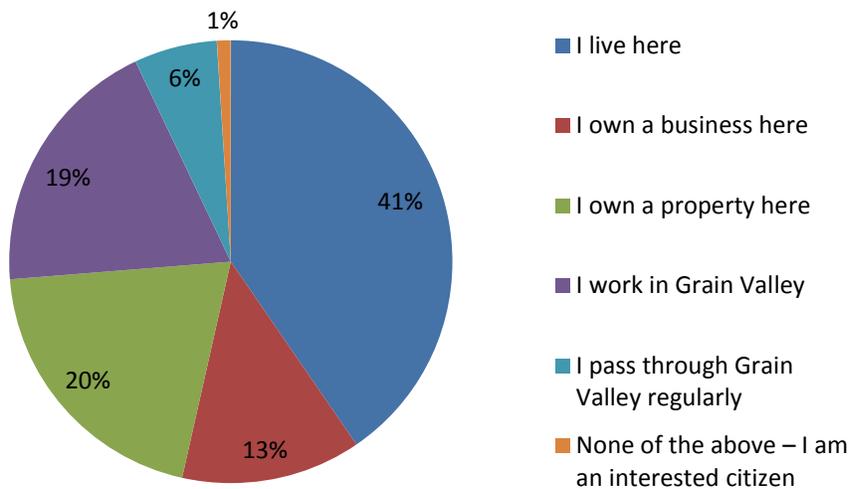
**Q17. Where do you live?**



**Q18. How long have you lived in Grain Valley?**

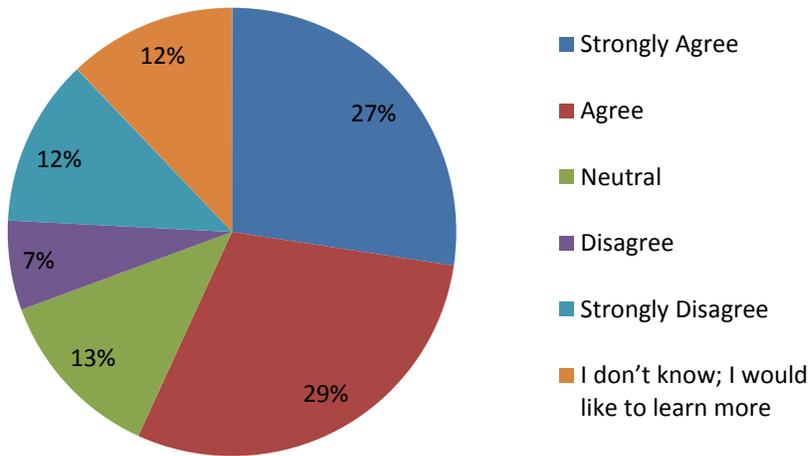


**Q19. What is your relationship to the Grain Valley community? (Choose all that apply.)**

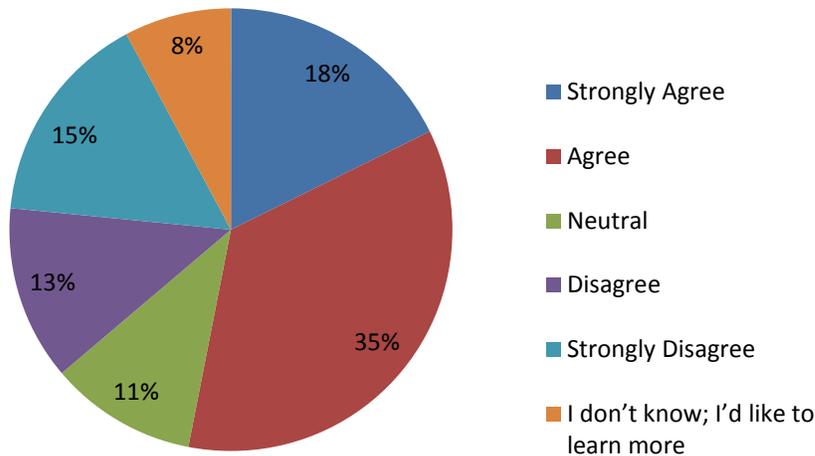


Public Meeting and Online Survey #2 - February 27, 2014. N = 248

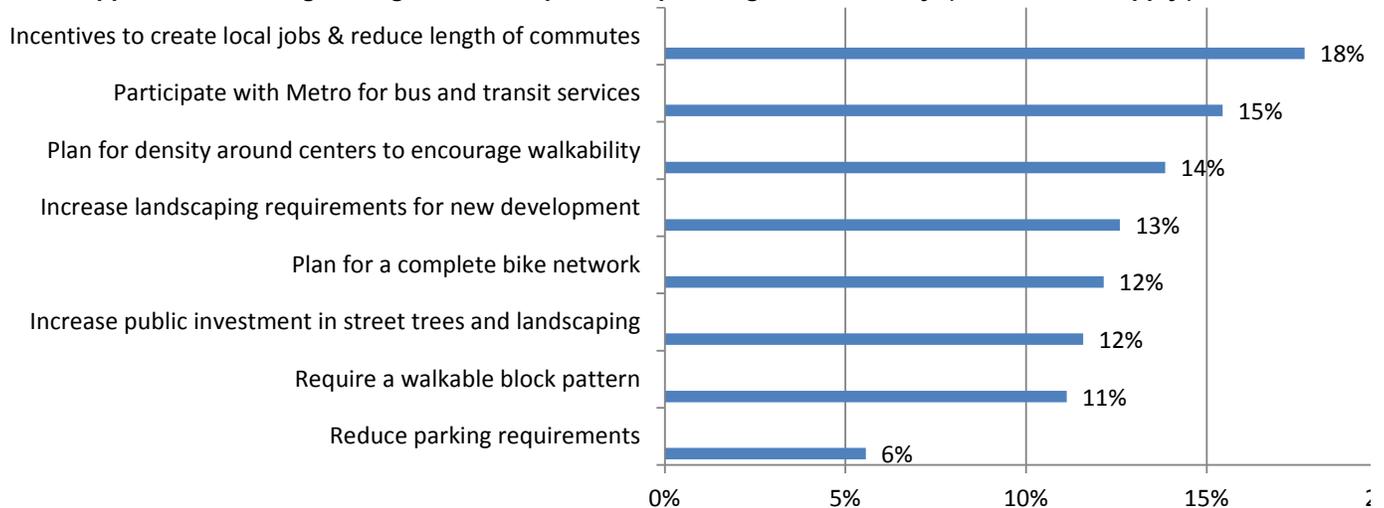
**Q1. I am in favor of expanding the planning area for Grain Valley to extend farther in all directions.**



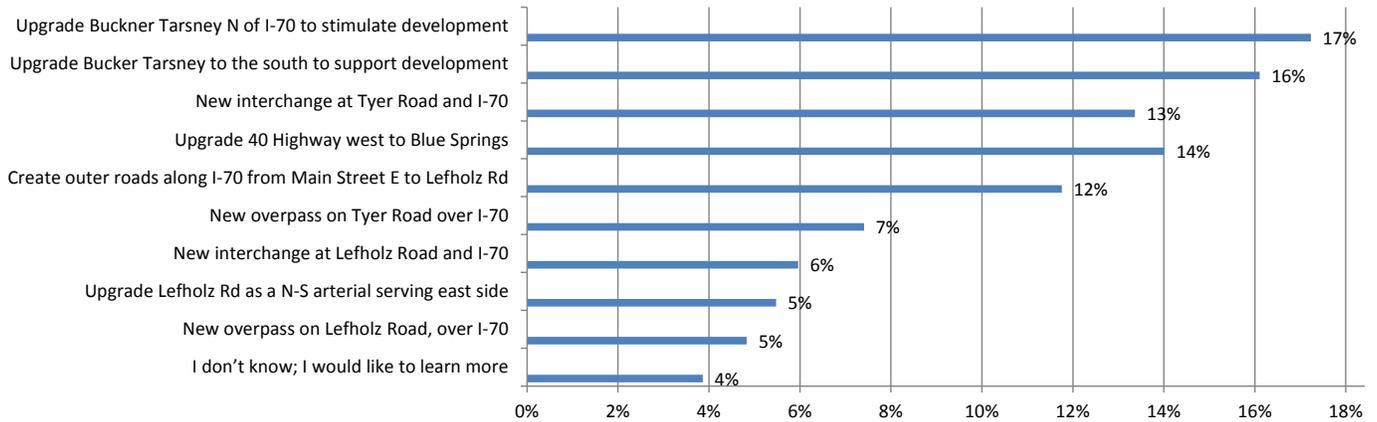
**Q2. I am in favor of expanding the Grain Valley city limits (through annexation) to proactively plan for growth.**



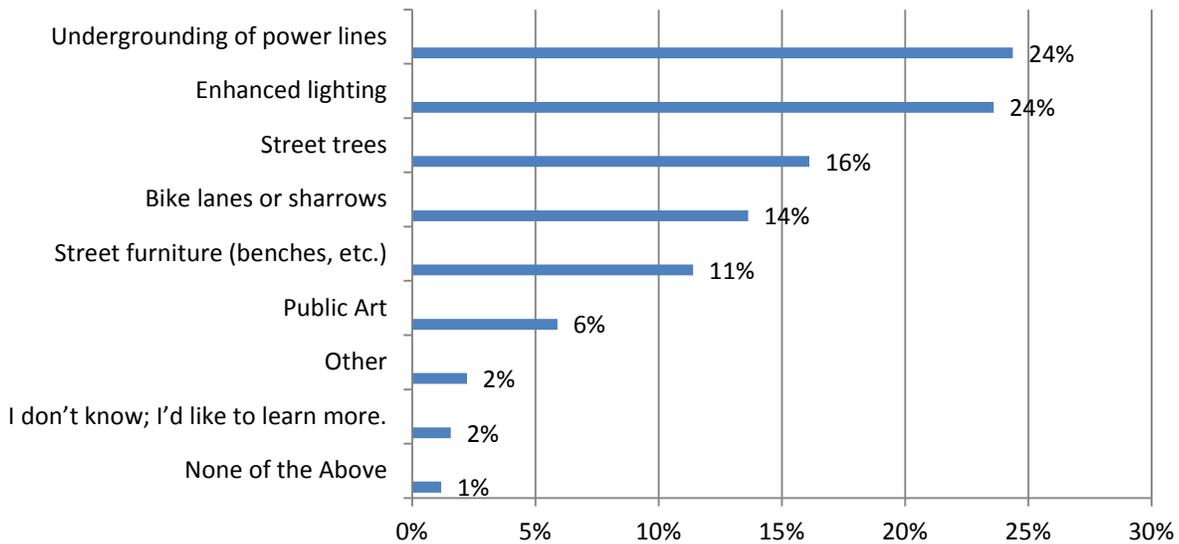
**Q3. I support the following strategies for transportation planning in Grain Valley. (Select all that apply.)**



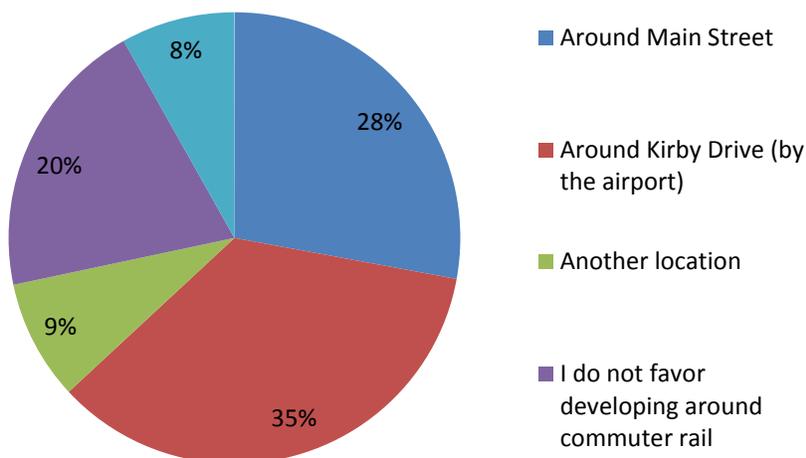
**Q4. Choose your top 3 road transportation projects for Grain Valley.**



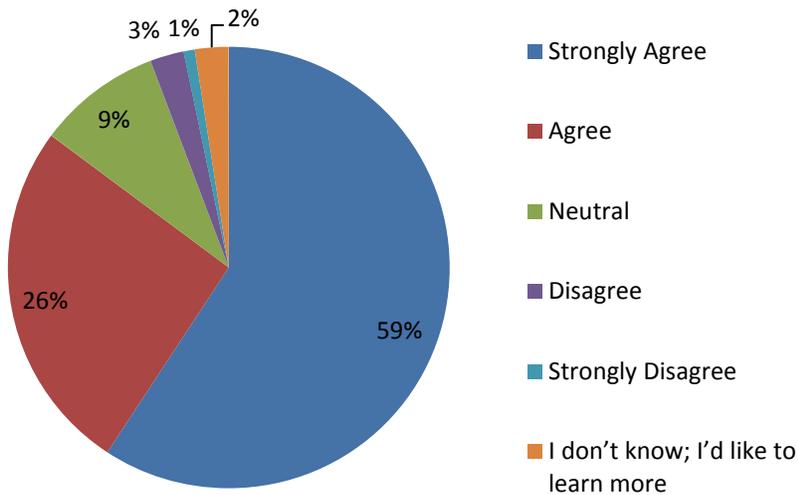
**Q5. City standards for major arterial streets should include the following: (choose all that apply).**



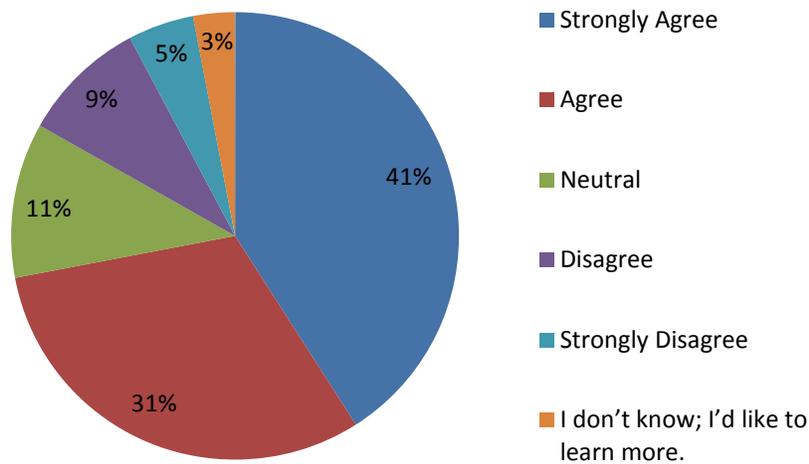
**Q6. I favor developing a Transit Oriented Development around a commuter rail station at the following location:**



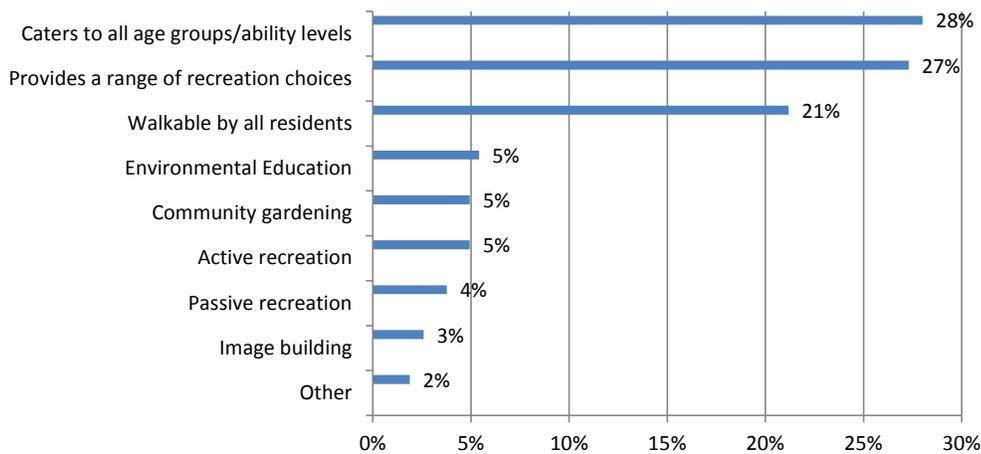
**Q7. I believe that Grain Valley's floodplain areas should be protected from development and used as parks and open space.**



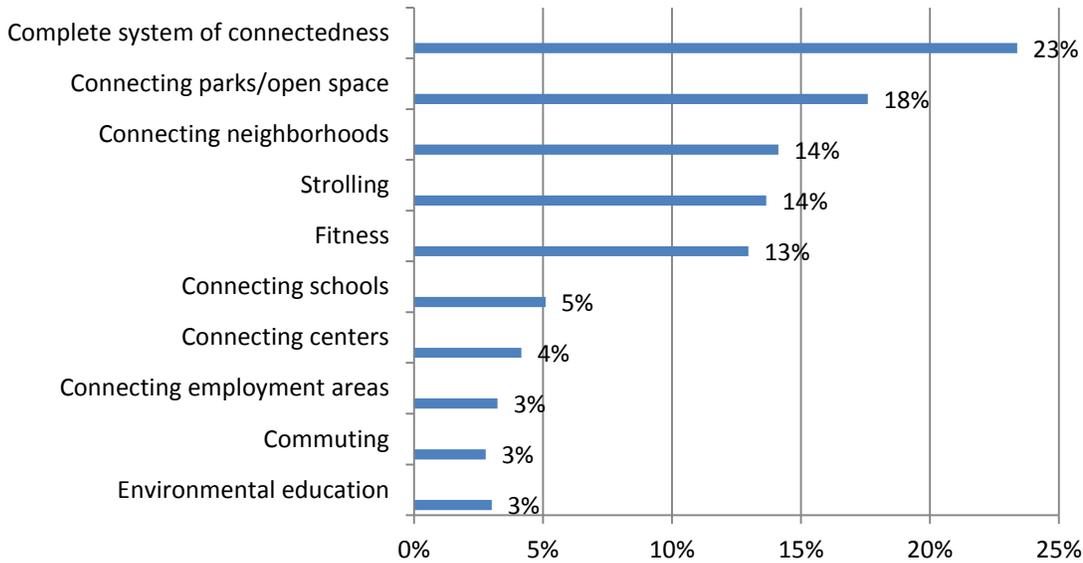
**Q8. The City should require all new developments to provide park and open space areas.**



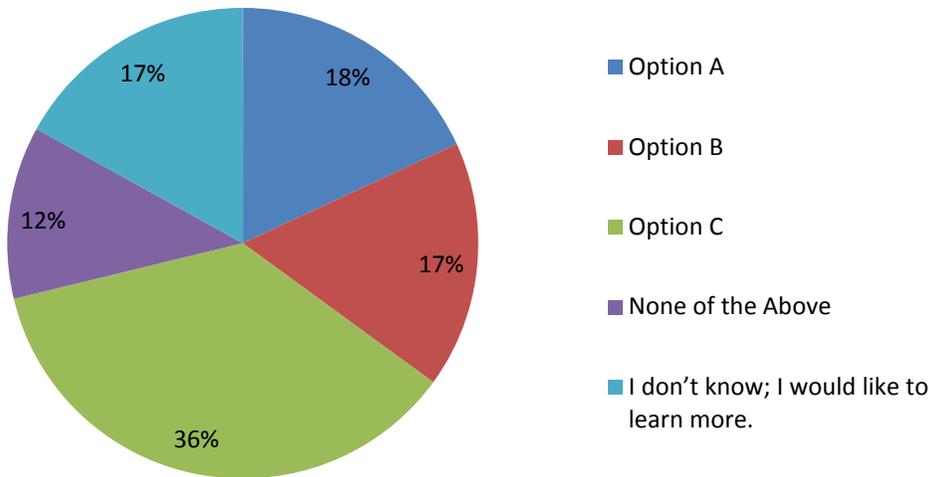
**Q9. What are your top 2 priorities for parks and open space?**



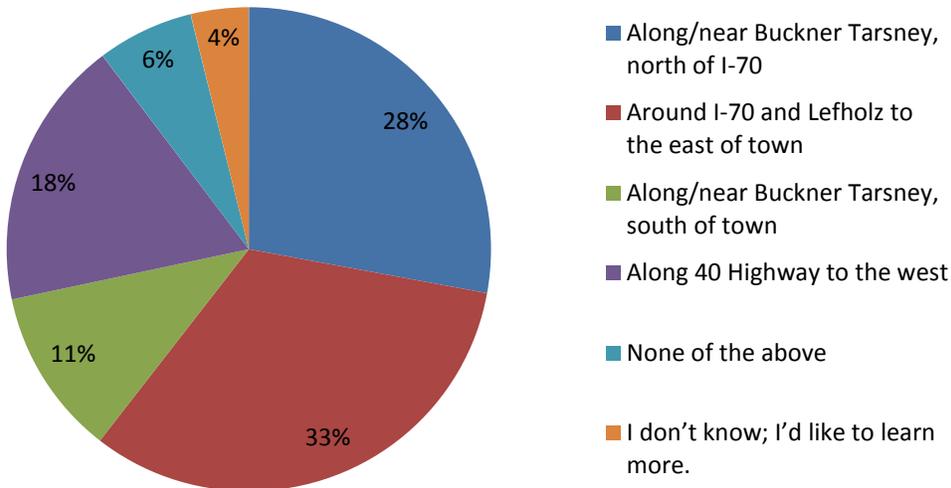
**Q10. What are your top 2 priorities for trails and greenways?**



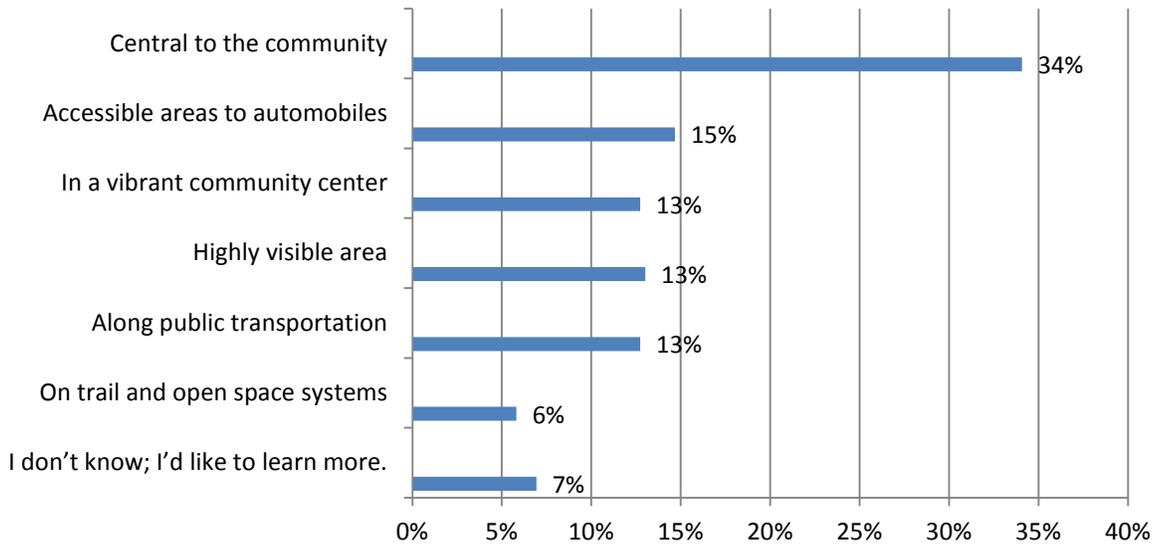
**Q11. I am in favor of the following Future Land Use alternative for Grain Valley as illustrated:**



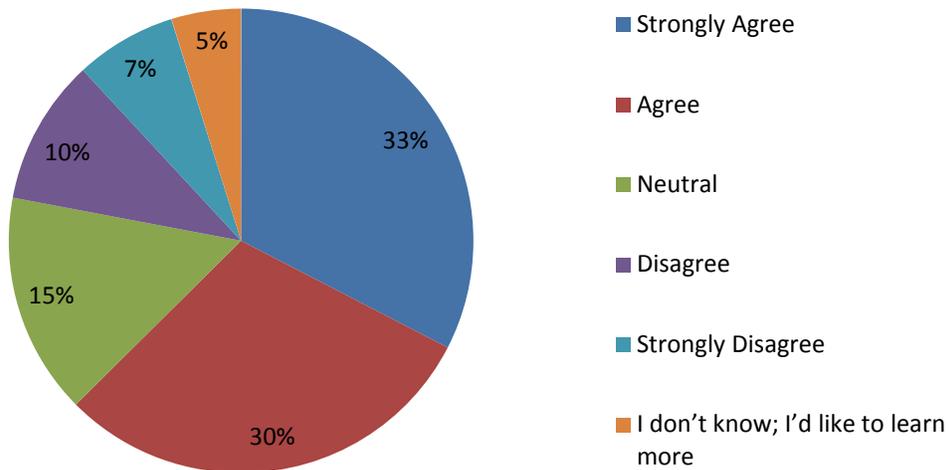
**Q12. The following would be the best location for a new Grain Valley business park:**



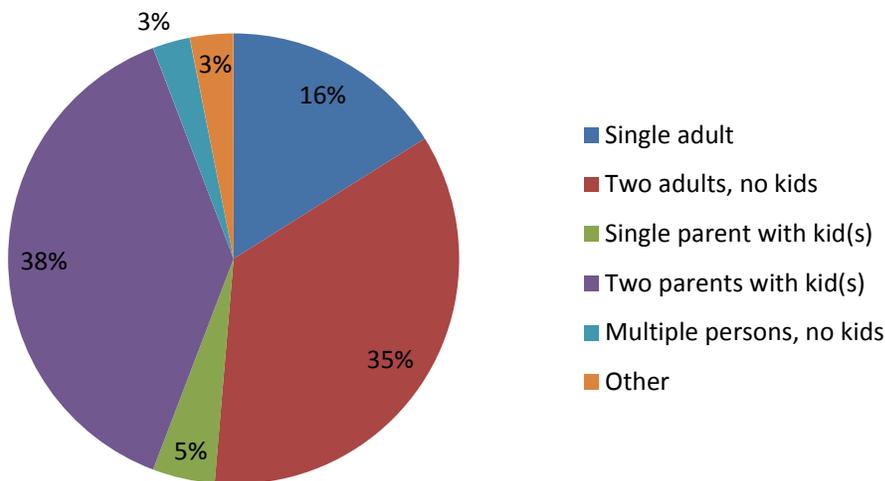
**Q13. The following criteria should guide any potential relocations of City Hall and the Community Center (Choose 2.)**



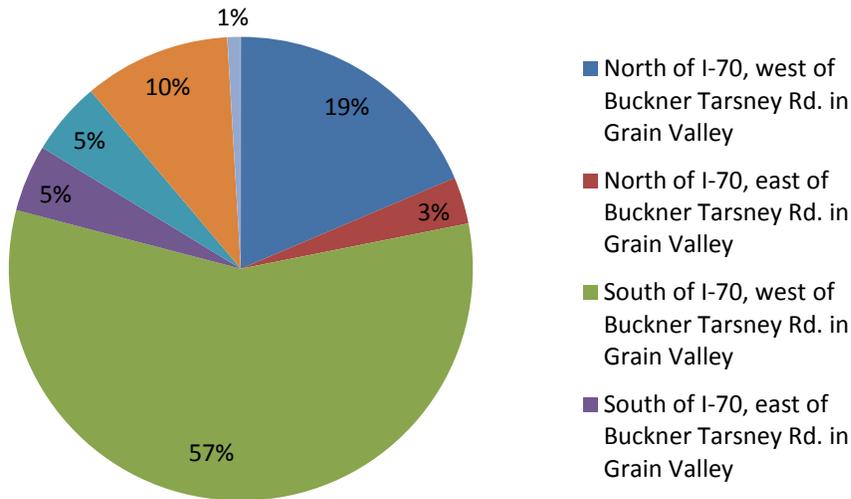
**Q14. I would favor a new "town center" development around City Hall and the community center.**



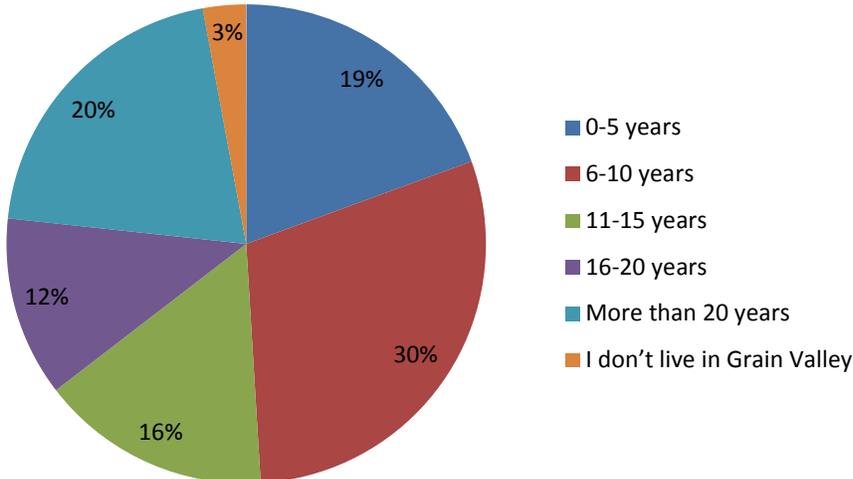
**Q15. The current living situation in my household is:**



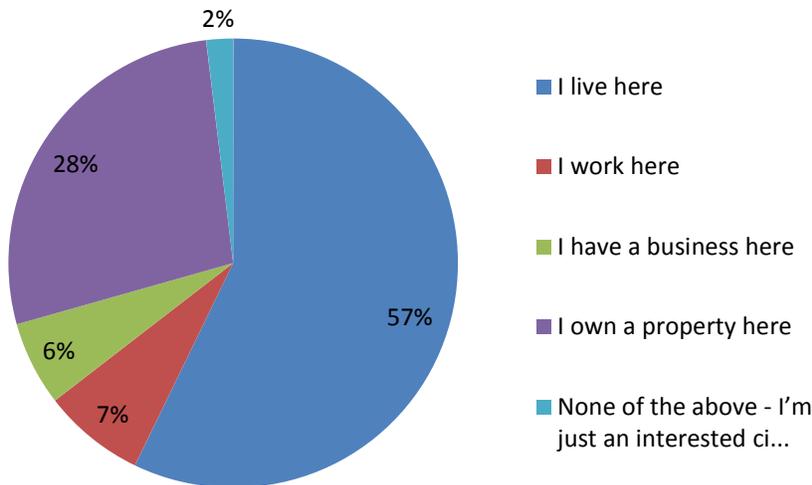
**Q16. In what part of the area do you live?**



**Q17. How long have you lived in Grain Valley?**

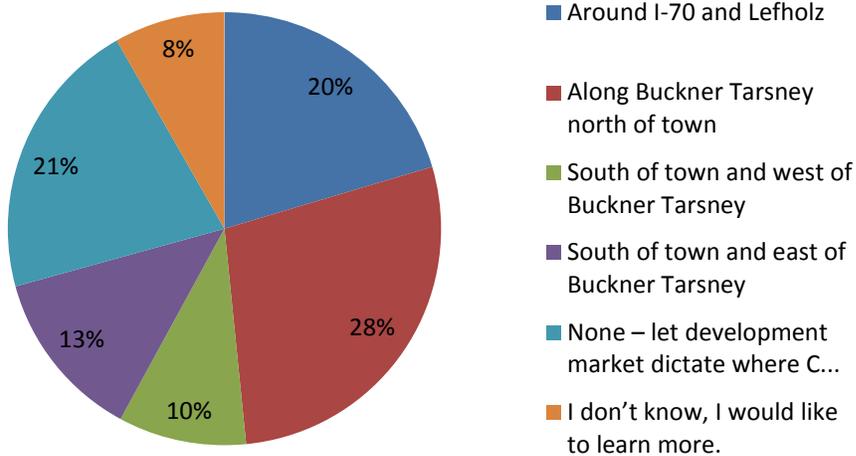


**Q18. What is your relationship to the Grain Valley community? (Select all that apply.)**

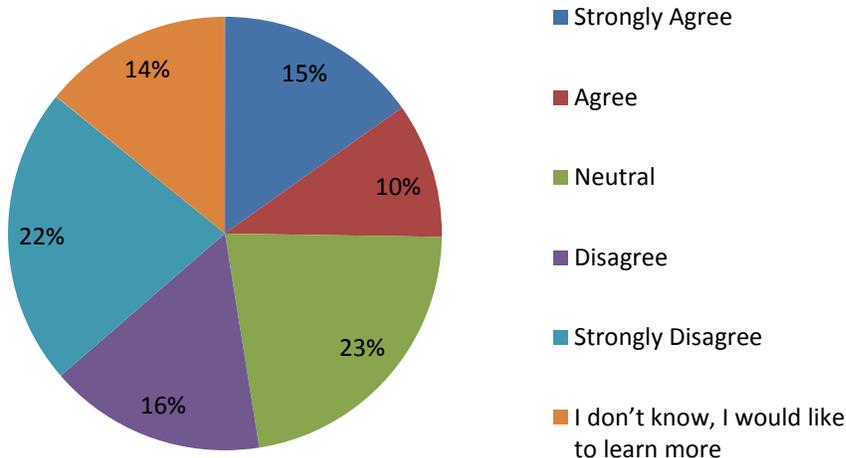


Public Meeting and Online Survey #3 - April 3, 2014. N = 99

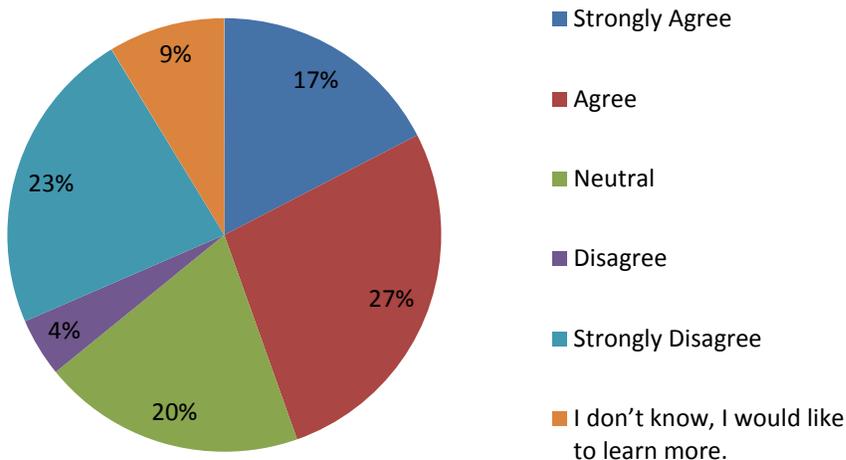
Q1. I would favor the City to prioritize the following areas for growth over the next 10-15 years:



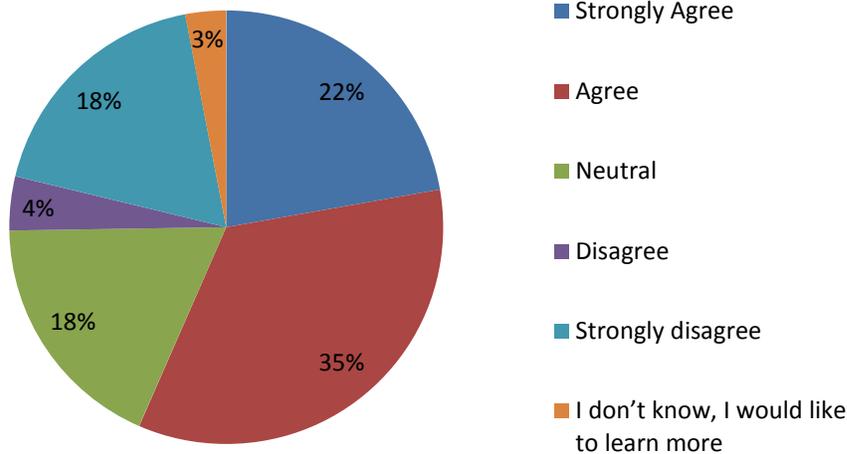
Q2. I am in favor of the preferred Future Land Use plan for Grain Valley as illustrated.



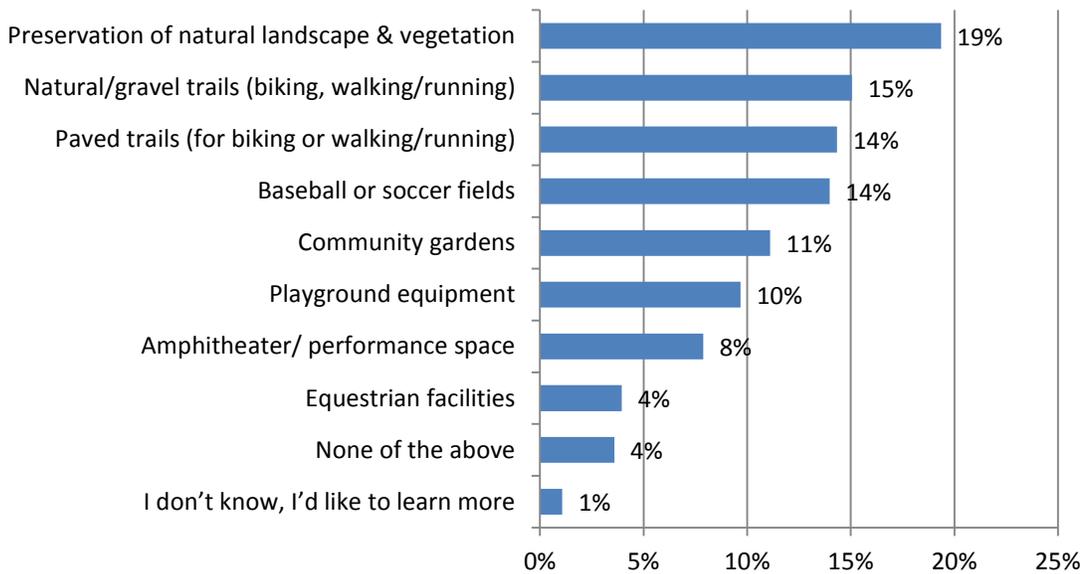
Q3. I am in favor of the preferred Transportation plan for Grain Valley as illustrated.



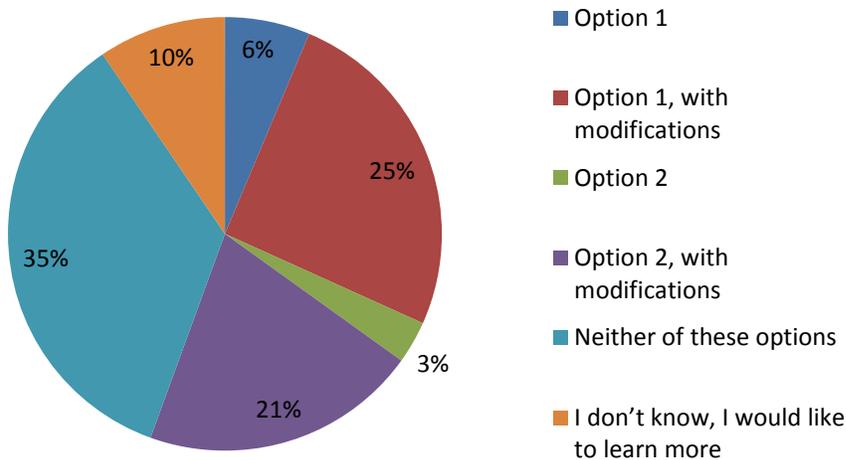
**Q4. I am in favor of the preferred Parks and Open Space plan for Grain Valley as illustrated.**



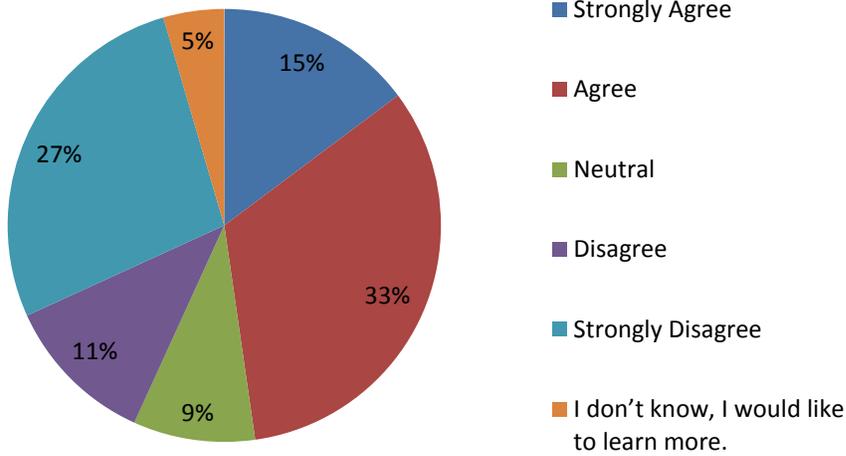
**Q5. I would prefer the following kinds of uses and amenities in the floodplain open spaces in town (choose all that apply.)**



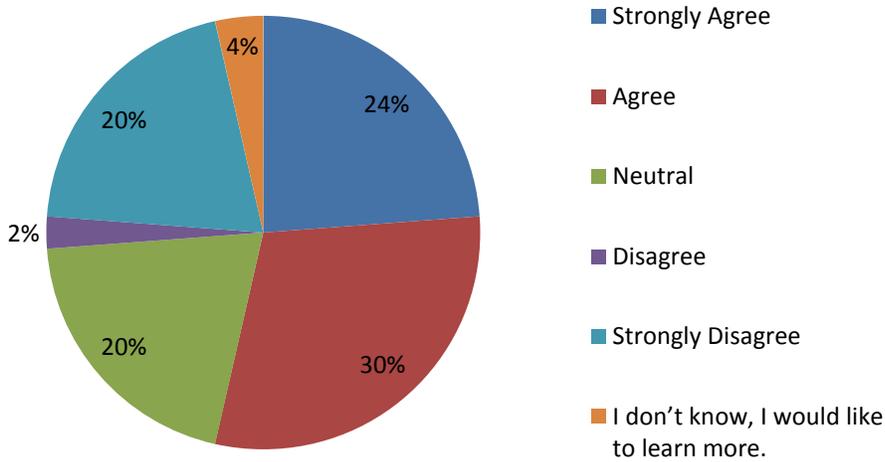
**Q6. I am in favor of the following conceptual plan for the area from Downtown north to I-70.**



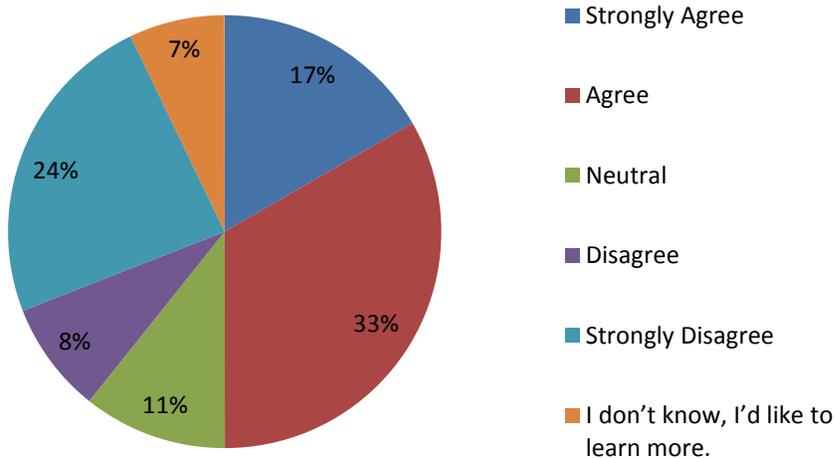
**Q7. I would favor relocating the Community Center from its current location to facilitate expansion and provide space for development north of downtown.**



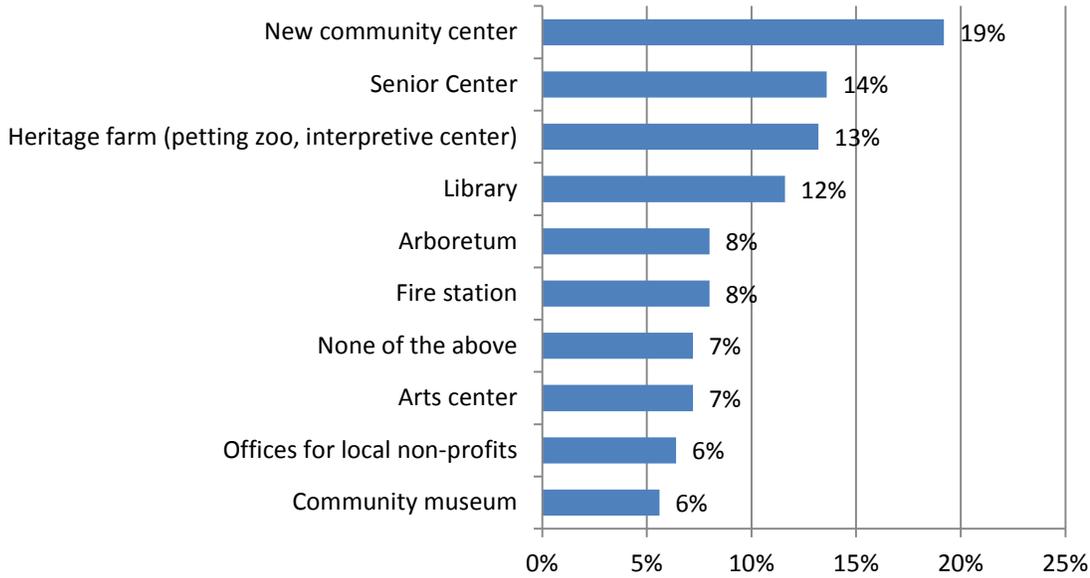
**Q8. I am in favor of the conceptual plan for the area around Duncan and Buckner Tarsney as illustrated.**



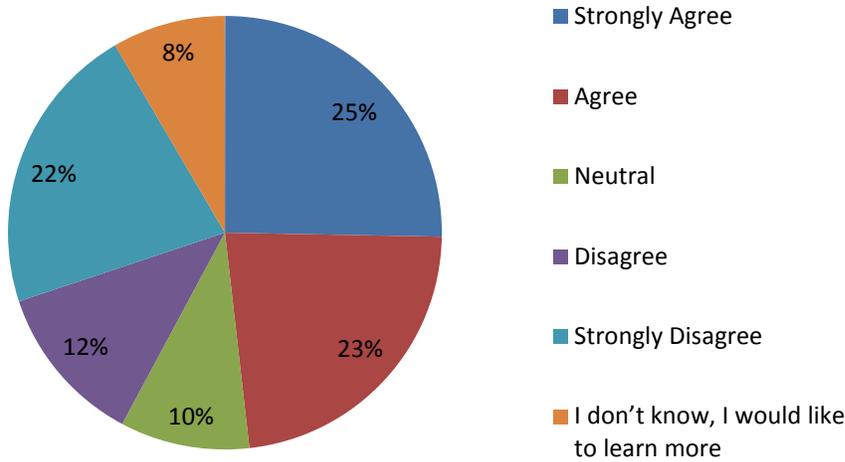
**Q9. I am in favor of the conceptual plan for the area around Sni-A-Bar and Buckner Tarsney as illustrated.**



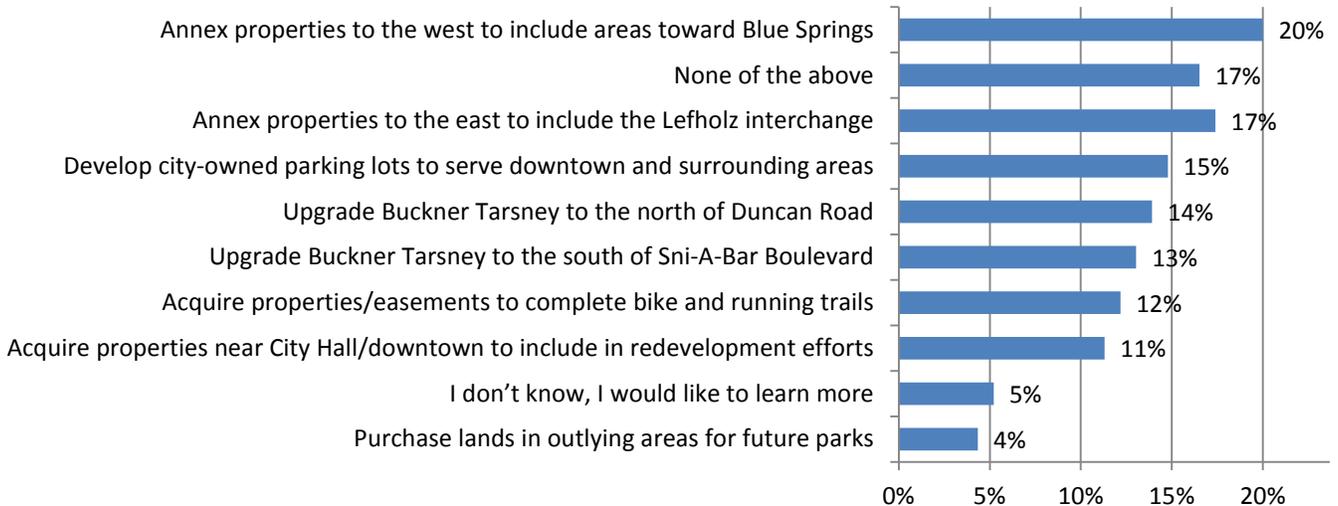
**Q10. I would like to see the following civic uses included in City-owned property around Sni-A-Bar Blvd. and Buckner Tarsney (choose all that apply.)**



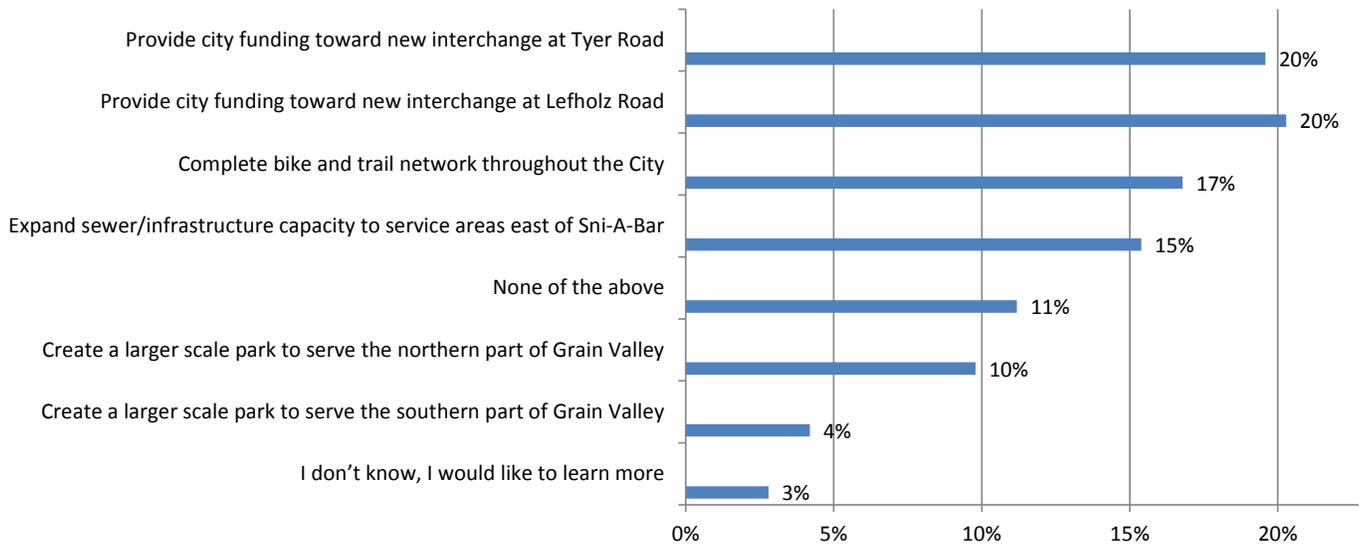
**Q11. I am in favor of the conceptual plan for the area around I-70 and Lefholz as illustrated.**



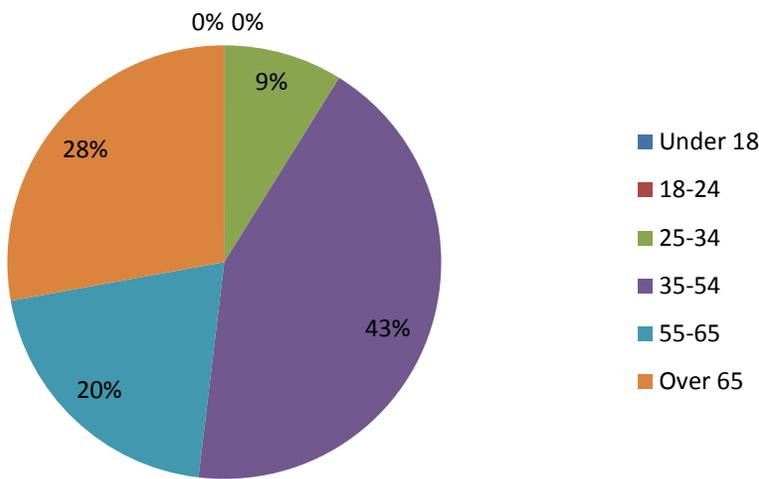
**Q12. I would prioritize the following two action items for the City to complete the next 5 years from this planning effort:**



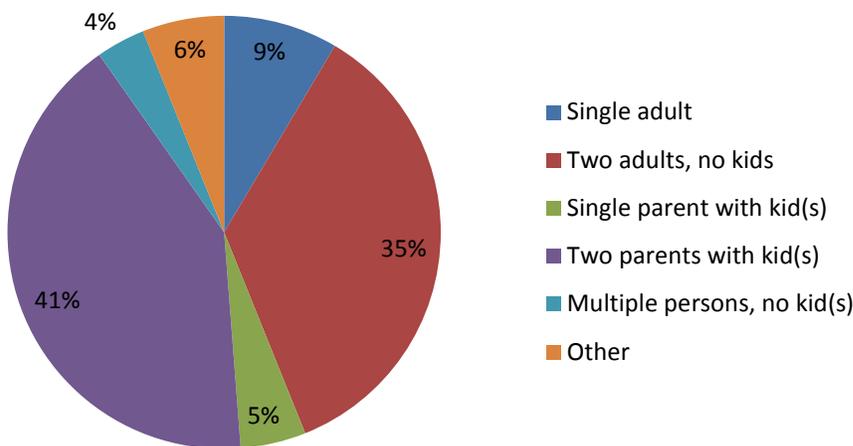
**Q13. I would prioritize the following two goals for the City (for the next 10 to 15 years) tied to this plan:**



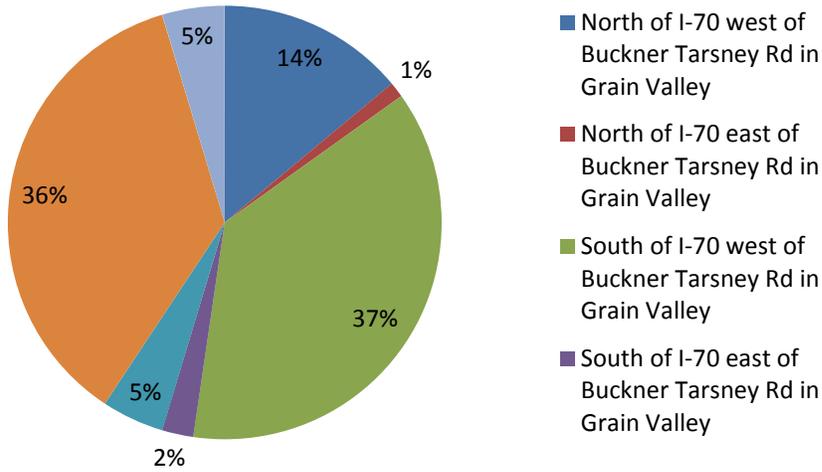
**Q14. The following is my current age range:**



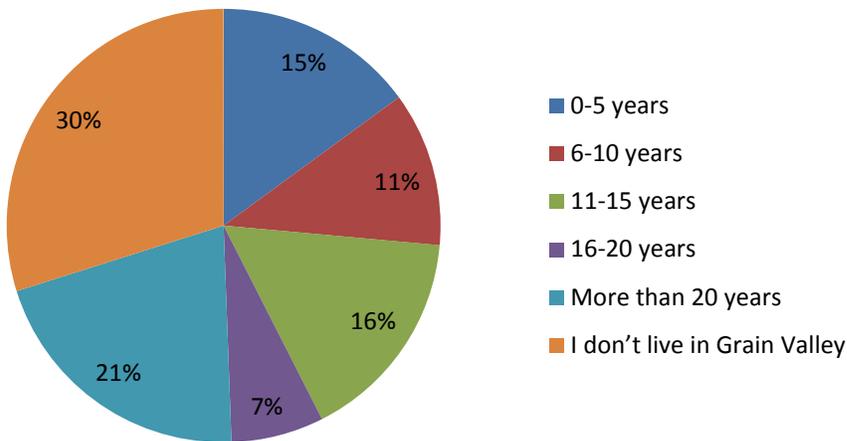
**Q15. The current living situation in my household is:**



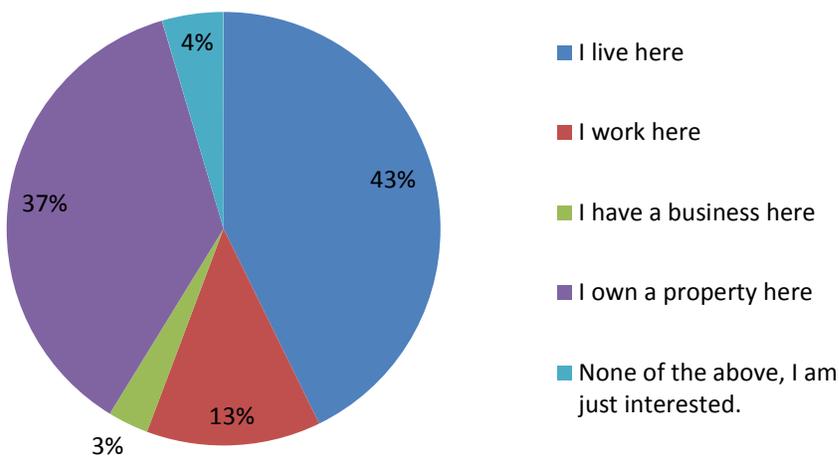
**Q16. In what part of the area do you live?**



**Q17. How long have you lived in Grain Valley?**



**Q18. What is your relationship to the Grain Valley community? (Select all that apply.)**



**Q19. How did this public engagement process meet your expectations?**

