

City of Leawood
Planning Commission Work Session
Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan and 2014 Comprehensive Plan
May 13, 2014

In attendance:

Commissioners: Mike Levitan, Ken Roberson, Kelly Jackson, Lisa Rohlf, Len Williams, Marc Elkins, Kip Strauss and William Ramsey.

Staff Members: Mark Klein, Michelle Kriks, Ursula Brandt, Franki Shearer, Richard Coleman, Brian Anderson and David Ley

Others: Marty Shukert and Cory Scott with RDG Consulting

PEDESTRIAN PLAN

Mr. Anderson: I have been working as a project manager with Cory Scott, who is focusing on the pedestrian side of things, and Marty Shukert, who is focusing on the bicycle part of the plan. We've been working on this for nine months. We have held three neighborhood community meetings at different areas of town. RDG has inventoried the condition of all our sidewalks. Marty has ridden his bicycle through the entire city, including every street that doesn't end in a cul-de-sac. We also interviewed focus groups, bicycle clubs, businesses and anybody interested to find out what they would like to in a Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan. We had an online survey, and the mayor appointed a steering committee, which includes: city employees and our bicycle friendly committee, which is comprised of includes five citizens with an interest in biking and walking and a Blue Valley School District building manager; a manager at Town Center Plaza; a bicycle shop owner and many others. I'd like to turn it over to Marty and Cory.

Mr. Shukert: It has been a pleasure to work in Leawood with all the city staff, steering committee and neighborhoods. We are now getting close to the end, which is now the beginning for you. The document talks about the goals for active transportation and ultimately why it is in the interest of Leawood to move along these lines. Our goals in developing this plan are to increase the use of biking and walking for transportation as well as for recreation. One of the ways we do that is by improving access to community destinations. It is interesting that many of the trips that are made in Leawood are less than 3 miles in length and could easily be made by foot or bike. The impact of a portion of those trips being diverted to active transportation really can have very significant implications for a variety of things, including personal health, energy consumption and a variety of benefits. Active transportation is also inherently pleasurable, which his important as well. By making our destinations more accessible by active transportation, we increase the number of people who use these techniques. We know a lot of people use the Regents Trails. The leading destination in our survey for bicycle/pedestrian systems were, in fact, the trails. The connectivity to the rest of the metropolitan area is also a key priority. This is all part of an effort to make Leawood more sustainable from a number of perspectives, including community and individual in terms of health and wellness. The city has established a goal of achieving bicycle friendly community status that often becomes an imprimatur for the kind of place that people want to live in, including the younger generation in particular. Finally and probably most importantly, we want to increase safety for everybody on the road or in the environment.

As Brian mentioned, the process included a variety of different techniques, including workshop meetings and a survey with 250 responses and much valuable information and 2,000 photographs taken while biking the streets. Cory can talk about sidewalk systems.

Mr. Scott: We looked at all the streets and sidewalk conditions, including ADA issues. You will have this as a benchmark for the next couple years. The walkable areas include Town Center Plaza; others are not as walkable.

Mr. Shukert: You'll notice a circle around different areas as well, which are schools and key destinations. In the process of riding the city, we were able to get a good deal of information on the actual conditions of bicycling as well. If there are a couple overall conclusions, first of all, Leawood has a huge number of really wonderful streets for active transportation that are quiet, scenic environments. On the other hand, a lot of those streets don't connect well. It is clearly a city that was built for neighborhood privacy but not necessarily for through movement. An interesting element of the work has been to figure out where those hidden routes are that link things together and provide great experiences. Another thing we found is that there are really three markets for both pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the city. One market is people going locally from neighborhoods to destinations within the city. Whether they're schools, the 119th and Roe cluster, the library or City Hall, that internal transportation is a significant market. The second market is people going through Leawood, which has an odd shape with a relatively narrow corridor that runs north and south with much cross traffic. The third market is interesting because it really is a recreational market with people who want to just get out, be in town, not necessarily go for long distances but to ride and walk around in the city's neighborhoods. They're not necessarily going anywhere in particular, but just are walking or riding for recreation. When we talk to people who would ride along Overbrook or Sagamore or any of those beautiful streets, we found they are doing it for the experience and not necessarily because it was going to take them anywhere. That is not an insignificant market in the city. There is an element in this plan of a market analysis with the relative size of potential. We used an account of the number of people who walk or ride. There are about 8,200 trips per day made by Leawood residents on foot for a variety of purposes. Something on the order of 2,500 trips are made by bike for specific purposes. If we apply a moderate level of mode split to Leawood over the next 20 years, those numbers would increase to about 22,000 pedestrian trips per day and about 10,000 bicycle trips per day generated by Leawood residents. The 10,000 trips per day correspond roughly to average daily traffic on a street like Mission Road between 119th and 135th.

Comm. Pateidl: What is the foundation for your projections?

Mr. Shukert: The basic numbers come from the American Community Survey, which is a census document that takes averages. It is part of a random survey that certain people get. One of the questions is how people travel to work. That becomes a status quo number, and then we have inflated that over a 20-year period to the level of bicycle or pedestrian movement you might see in a city like Chicago or Minneapolis. Then there are different factors applied to school trips that are based on current versus future percentages of trips made to school by kids.

Comm. Pateidl: What I am looking for is comparability to establish credibility. Regarding how people get to work, Leawood, historically and substantially, is a bedroom community. The issue of going to work in Leawood becomes somewhat irrelevant in my mind when evaluating how many bicycle trips are taken.

Mr. Shukert: That could be changing pretty dramatically with some of this.

Comm. Pateidl: What I'm wondering is how that is brought to realistic, credible numbers that we can evaluate. We went from 2,500 trips to 10,000 trips, which is a substantial increase in my mind. When the numbers become staggering, they become questionable in my mind.

Mr. Shukert: Except that it is not a staggering number, and when you think about the employment centers around Leawood within a 2-3-mile radius of Leawood, it is pretty substantial. I would say that right now, we would observe a very low percentage of those trips are made by bike, but there is no reason those shouldn't be very powerful attractors. Right now, .4% of trips to work are made by bicycle. To take that up to 1.5%, which is basically what we've done, will compare to Minneapolis' 3.9%.

Comm. Pateidl: There is no comparison between Minneapolis and Leawood.

Mr. Shukert: No, but given how Leawood is situation with employment centers within a short distance, it is a number that is achievable within 20 years with good infrastructure. These are not crazy numbers; we're talking about 98.5% of all trips being made by some other mode. Another element of the market is expansion to new destinations. It was very interesting that in this survey with the bicycle portion, the highest, most important destination was to trails, followed by parks, followed by the library and Mission Farms as the strongest destinations. We thought that the survey was split with 47% being committed bicyclists and the other 50% increasing the amount of bicycling they did. We asked about the kind of infrastructure that would make them feel comfortable, that they preferred. Generally, people were comfortable with quiet neighborhood streets, which is good because we've got a lot of those. The pedestrian market is a little bit different. About 52% were people who characterized themselves as pretty highly committed to walking. Again, this is split half and half. We get more people who walk occasionally, but we still had huge numbers who were frequent bicyclists. This was a voluntary survey of 250 people. It's not a scientific survey. We are gauging people who do these things anyway, who are nevertheless telling us what they would be more comfortable with or what they think will work in other contexts. Cory will tell you what people wanted the most.

Mr. Scott: We saw the lighted crossing as favorable. Defining the crosswalks and safe crossings is something from the survey.

Comm. Shukert: In our work, we borrowed from work done on design parameters in Holland, who knows the most about this subject. We've adopted and modified six criteria for active transportation design.

- 1) Directness: You should be able to get from where you are to where you want to go in a relatively direct or straight line. Directness is different for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- 2) Integrity: Bicyclists and pedestrians should not be left in the middle of nowhere or in a discontinuous situation.
- 3) Safety: People moving in their own power should be in safe situations.
- 4) Comfort: Being in situations that are more or less pleasurable and don't induce stress.
- 5) Experience: Walking and riding should go through attractive areas that provide positive experience.
- 6) Feasibility: Making relatively small investments that accomplish large benefits in terms of connectivity.

This is what we have come up with from a system perspective. As the process develops, we would like to hear your reactions. There are several different kinds of routes with principal lines that are primarily north and south with one interesting exception: a route we've developed that runs from Ward Parkway Center under the tunnel, around the parking lot, up along the creek, up the bridge to nowhere, through a cul-de-sac, across town, winding up at Cur de Ars and Ranchmart. This route makes use and extends the side path along Nall Avenue and involved a conversion of Mission Road, which is wide enough for bike lanes to a multi-modal corridor. The path follows Lee Boulevard and an east side corridor, then uses Overbrook, part of State Line and then comes down Kenneth and provides connectivity on the east side of town through local streets and pathways. The plan goes through each kind of facility, talking about how it functions. The multi-use trails are primarily Tomahawk and Indian Creek Trails with a possibility of an extension of Ironwoods Park's trail system to Mission Road and Kenneth Road and some other short connections that really provide some interesting benefits as well. There are nine cross-town routes that range from 83rd Street on the north to 151st Street on the south with future reconstruction as a complete street or multi-modal. 143rd will be going through that process in the very short term. "Bicycle Boulevard" is a term of ours that implies a quiet, continuous pedestrian and bicycle corridor designed for slow moving vehicle traffic and provides access that is quiet and neighborhood oriented. Some other terms that are used are "quiet streets," "neighborhood greenways" and "neighborhood boulevards." These corridors have very little modification necessary to them other than pavement markings here and there and signage. Finally, neighborhood connections link these major elements of the system together.

We've also pulled a lot of these things together into two circle tours. We know that this allows somebody to take a 30-mile hike or cycle trip without ever leaving the city limits of Leawood, except for a short expedition into Overland Park. It also has a lot of opportunities for cross connections and cross loops, so this whole system functions for the recreational user and the even rider as well.

Each of the proposed routes gets matched to an infrastructure. Areas that involve shared streets or lanes really require very little investment or modification. There are places where bike lanes would be established and where new side paths would be built, such as extending the Nall Avenue side path south to the city line. Other changes like that go all the way to little segments of multi-use pathway or trail that produce very good connectivity opportunities. The infrastructure elements include design standards for both pedestrian and bicycle systems that are designed for safety, usability and comfort. Then it goes into the individual components of the system. On Lee Boulevard, one of the short-term options that relates to bicycle transportation is doing a minor widening so there is a comfortable route off-road on the areas that are uphill. This gets the slower-moving bicyclist climbing the hill out of the way of automobile traffic. Another component of that is diverting people who wanted quieter, more sedate experiences to Manor Road, which parallels Lee, Meadow and Belinder farther north. Ultimately, Lee Boulevard would be rebuilt, and we're suggesting a new standard for that, which would be a continued two-lane roadway with a bike lane along it to provide safe travel for all modes of transportation. We have some blow-up ideas that are interesting as well, including the area around the Ward Parkway Center, that would include a cheap way of getting a trail built, namely using the outside of a largely abandoned parking lot for cycle track continuing along the edge of parking and along the creek, tying into the bridge, coming up to 89th Street with the trail option along the creek and then coming across town on the way to Ranchmart using local streets. Mission Road has another quick opportunity that involves converting a portion of the route, which is now a two-lane road with bike lane, much as 123rd and 127th were done. The other types of facilities: the cross town routes, boulevards and small trail projects can do a lot to increase connectivity, which is one of the biggest feasibility benefits.

The plan also gets into detail in some areas. We looked at the Town Center area and how to improve both pedestrian access, overall circulation and the amount of parking and amenity. We developed an idea that does a lot of interesting things, including providing a nice place for outdoor dining at Panera, a direct path between the theaters and the shopping center and a direct connection of the pedestrian precinct that the shopping center is planning to develop with the library and City Hall by doing a few adjustments to circulation patterns. The plan has a thorough analysis of each school.

Mr. Scott: Schools were critical elements. We looked at each of the schools and at specific recommendations. First, we looked at the analysis and suggestions to improve safety and convenience. We also look at case studies for intersections and pathways, just providing some demonstrations of the principles we're outlining in the plan.

Mr. Shukert: Finally, the plan looks at sequencing with the types of modifications needed in streets to adapt them to complete transportation. Some streets need almost no modification; some only need minor modification. We use this to move toward cost estimating, phasing and putting together and overall capital program over a period of years to implement the plan. A similar kind of process is done for sidewalks, and it establishes high priority sidewalks that serve major destinations. Other priorities start to correspond with areas in the overall self-propelled Leawood system and then establishing what is essentially a major sidewalk system for the city. We cost it out in terms of sector of the city and overall priority.

The plan concludes with what we call the other support systems. The bicycle friendly community process includes five Es: Engineering, Encouragement (getting people more involved) Education (teaching how to ride or walk safely), Enforcement (establishing rules and enforcing on all users of the road, Evaluation (process by which we tell if we've done any good or not and policy, which addresses things that you're concerned about: land use, regulations, parking requirements, access requirements and so forth that relate to ensuring that major developments are friendly to pedestrians and bicycles.

That is the scope of the plan. The time frame is to take a few weeks to incorporate comments made by the steering committee today. We had a productive meeting with them to refine the document and

do a little reordering as well. Then we get that posted and move toward a City Council work session scheduled for July 7th.

Comm. Pateidl: When you look at the various uses of the bicycle for transportation, what do you see as the priorities for effective implementation at this point? Do you start with the streets, the trails or the signage?

Mr. Shukert: You start with the things that are not very expensive and that establish important connections. One of those is Mission Road from 119th to 135th. It's an interesting street because it has a lot of destinations on it with a lot of local traffic. Actually by providing bike lanes, it narrows the street perceptually so that the speeds that people travel on Mission Road get to be more consistent with the speeds we want.

Comm. Pateidl: It is 35 MPH now and is well policed. I think Mission Road is a perfect example with plenty of room to establish bike trails, and it probably would help.

Mr. Shukert: Another interesting connection that I would refer to as a small project that adds a lot of value is 105th Street and Mohawk. Mohawk ends in a cul-de-sac with a path north, and then it comes into Brookwood School. A use of that street which has no traffic on it and then a construction of a really improved trail that leads to the school and into 103rd Street would be very good to do from a safe routes point of view. The trail connection that we have suggested that takes a bridge that has already been built, which is the most expensive part of any trail, and makes it useful with a cross-town connection from State Line and Ward Parkway to Ranchmart would also be a good value item. These are places with a demand, and by spending a little bit of money and effort, you take advantage of capitalizing on that demand.

Comm. Pateidl: What struck me in your comments was when you surveyed the individuals that had an interest in biking and their primary destinations were the trails, the parks, the library, Mission Farms and quiet streets. That tells me that, at least from that survey, the primary function of bicycling in Leawood is recreation.

Mr. Shukert: Right now, it is.

Comm. Pateidl: If we are going to do something that is a benefit of our citizens of the community, focusing perhaps on recreation now, which builds the interest in bicycling and dealing with other projects that, in my mind, are difficult to manage and are a bit problematic; i.e., Lee Boulevard and the reconstruction of that street, I think we can foster cross-town routes on Mission Road and others to draw people off Lee Boulevard in the interest of safety and put them on trails, which is where they want to be in the first place.

Mr. Shukert: Also, schools are really important.

Comm. Pateidl: Schools are really important because of the kids.

Comm. Shukert: Schools are important from every perspective, and that is a very important priority.

Comm. Jackson: If the trails have bikes and pedestrians, they are starting to become unsafe with the number of bicyclists.

Mr. Shukert: They are.

Comm. Jackson: We need the bikes off the trails and into the streets. It's getting dangerous for the pedestrians on the trails because the bikers are going too fast, unless we could start policing the trails.

Comm. Pateidl: There was something I was glad to see in there, but it was glossed over very quickly at the end, and that is enforcement. Right now, my experience is that the bikers are not obeying basic traffic laws like stop signs and red lights. Frequent occasions with groups riding four abreast down Tomahawk Boulevard, it is hardly courteous to the remainder of the population. I think at the top of the list is to get some regulations out and enforce them.

Mr. Shukert: I am also an LCI [League Certified Instructor], and one thing we really try to emphasize is every bicyclist out there is an ambassador for bicycling. There will be people who don't know better, people who are riding on the left side of the road because they think they're safer. People who are experienced bicyclists should know better than to block traffic or to act like they're in a critical mass ride. One of my favorite things to do is if somebody is trying to turn right and I am in the first in queue at an intersection of a traffic light is to go out of the way and wave them through. A little act like that really does help. There are a couple of other interesting things to consider, and that is that sometimes one goes through a red light because the light isn't sensitive to a bicycle. Kansas actually has a dead red law, which states that if a light doesn't pick you up and doesn't sense you in a reasonable amount of time, it is legal for a bicycle or motorcycle to go through it. People see that and think the guy is running a red light.

Mr. Anderson: Some topics that have come up in our bicycle committee meetings have included the Leawood Police, and we have discussed enforcement regarding cyclists and also motorists that don't drive correctly with cyclists. One of the concerns an officer brought up to me is that he felt like he always gives a cyclist a warning first if they go through a stop light or sign. The fine is a minimum of \$120 for cars or bicycles. A diversion program was discussed with steering a cyclist who doesn't know what he's doing into either paying the fine or taking a class from LCI to learn better riding behavior.

Comm. Pateidl: That is very encouraging. I don't know the specifics, but in concert with a program that emphasizes being bicycle and pedestrian friendly, particularly the bicycle side, I think that the rules, regulations and enforcement are really important. They don't need to be ridiculous. A \$130 fine for riding a stop sign on a bicycle would make people go crazy, but a \$50 fine might catch their attention. Then, after 2-3 violations, it might trigger the requirement to take the LCI class. Whatever we can do to improve not only the safety for the bicyclist, but as our community ages and somebody hits somebody on a bicycle, it's very traumatic for them, too. We don't need that. There are all kinds of factors behind decent education, rules and policies.

Mr. Shukert: A bicyclist hit my wife in St. Louis. She got her nose broken in the process, and I never heard the end of it. It happened on the Del Mar Loop, and she came out between two cars, so she wasn't exactly blameless as a pedestrian. A pedestrian could be very badly hurt by a bicyclist.

Mr. Scott: Regarding the bicyclists and the pedestrians on the trails, one of the things I found out, particularly in Johnson County and the metro as a whole, is that there is a preponderance of conflict in our area that may not occur to the intensity that it does in areas that have more advanced on-road bicycle systems is that a lot of those faster riders on the trails don't feel safe on the roads as a whole in the metro because of the history of our roadway system. Bicyclists must be able to get from Point A to Point B and feel safe in the conditions in all the cities along the way. You will see more bicyclists on the trails, wanting to do the longer, faster riding, and they're using the trails for that because they just don't have the confidence to ride in the traffic we have. They're still riding too fast on the trails because they have the physical ability to do that.

Comm. Pateidl: Maybe we put a speed limit on the trails. If they want to use the trails, they have to abide by the rules.

Mr. Scott: Some cities that have a longer history of doing on-road bicycle accommodations is they begin to see a decline in that type of conflict on multi-use trails because that segment of riders is then seeing that they can ride the trail and not deal with the dogs on leashes and the kids that aren't paying any attention.

Mr. Anderson: From a park perspective, I'm hearing more and more that the bicyclists and pedestrians are conflicting on the trail.

Comm. Jackson: I would agree; a lot of it is because they don't feel comfortable on the roads. As far as how much bicycle traffic there's going to be, I think it's just going to be more. They're coming out with some amazing half-electric bikes.

Mr. Shukert: That will be a big game-changer, actually. The e-bike brings the bike to a lot of people who would never ride one otherwise.

Comm. Jackson: You can carry more on it; you can go farther; you don't have to worry about the hills.

Comm. Strauss: I like the painted bike lanes, but did you hear from people that there are some streets they shouldn't be on? Why wouldn't you put them on every arterial?

Mr. Shukert: Yes, there are streets that shouldn't have bike lanes. For example, 135th Street is not a very comfortable situation for anybody. That little strip of paint is not that healthy for human life, especially when that whole system has been very smartly designed to have 133rd and 137th running parallel, and they are both excellent corridors for slower, multi-modal traffic. To me, a street like Mission Road north of 105th Street is very uncomfortable with four lanes and traffic moving very fast. There is nowhere to go and nowhere to widen it. Also, as speeds and volume increase, the demand for separation increases. That is where buffering comes in, as well as the separated side path such as we have on Nall Avenue. Those work from the perspective of getting people out of the line of traffic. Many people are concerned about overtaking collisions as people are getting hit from behind, but they really are quite dangerous at intersections. Special care needs to be taken in the design of the intersection to make sure the pedestrian or bicyclist is visible and that the motorist is aware that there is a path. All of these are safety considerations for all users. Ultimately, the top responsibility of both the planner of a system and the city implementation is to keep each other safe. Bike lanes are very appropriate in situations with volume in the range of 5,000-15,000 vehicles per day. They get to be less safe with 45-50 MPH environments with multi-lane traffic that is just not expecting bikes.

Comm. Strauss: In your public meetings or surveys, did you hear an overriding request?

Mr. Shukert: On-street infrastructure, bike lanes and way-finding were all important. From an infrastructure point of view, people do like quiet streets, with the exception of 1% that we call Forrester-istas. There is a guy called John Forrester who is very famous and pioneered a lot of what we call vehicular cycling. He is an absolute dogged opponent of trails and bike lanes because they restrict the freedom of a bicyclist to be anywhere. I'm not in that political party. I think these facilities should be in places where they don't increase stress on anybody.

Mr. Anderson: When the bike lane was put on 127th, I had a call from a resident complaining about the bike lane. He was an avid bicyclist and didn't want it for that exact reason.

Mr. Scott: Some of the dislike of bike lanes comes from the extra maintenance.

Mr. Anderson: Our street maintenance program is frequent enough here that I don't see that being an issue.

Mr. Shukert: We are not putting a lot of bike lanes in the system.

Mr. Anderson: That's right; we're using a lot of quiet neighborhood streets.

Comm. Elkins: In your surveys, did you get any feedback in terms of signage or direction finding? How does the plan address that?

Mr. Shukert: That's a great point. Two levels of way-finding came up in the survey. One deals with the trail system, and the other deals with the street system. My own personal perception is that the trails have a wonderful system, but I find it baffling. The Johnson County trail system has a lot of divergences, and you don't know whether you're on the main trail or if you're going off to something that will end. Eventually, you find out where you are by consulting your phone, and you shouldn't have to do that. Way-finding is a significant issue in Leawood's slice of the trail system. From a street point of view, the idea of putting together these sequences of streets will be a fairly new concept; although, people who are experienced riders around here have figured it out and already do it, but it is very easy in Leawood to go down the street that feels like it's going to take you somewhere, and then it becomes a cul-de-sac or to go down a street like 132nd, which is a wonderful street, and think that it will converge with 133rd or a shopping center, and it never quite connects. A moderate number of way-finding signs that is well thought out and discreet will be helpful.

Mr. Anderson: The signs would have which principal route it is, a picture of a bicycle and an arrow with the destination. If you need to make a turn on the route, a sign would direct you.

Comm. Elkins: That would be hugely helpful.

Comm. Jackson: Are the other cities going to pick up the same signage?

Mr. Anderson: I don't know how much of the recreational loop is going through Overland Park. We would probably control most of it, so I would imagine we could work something out. I know Overland Park is doing a bicycle plan currently. I don't believe it addresses pedestrians like ours does. Marty and Cory have reached out to our adjoining communities and looked at the plans they have and the streets they have thought of.

Comm. Jackson: There is a big 25-mile loop that goes through all those cities. Could that all be consistent?

Mr. Anderson: That group in Johnson County meets occasionally. We have agreed that the zero-mile market begins in Leawood going west and increases. It would be great if we all could commit to a sign design. You have to remember that one city may be ready to fund something while another may not. It is tough to get everybody on the same page.

Mr. Scott: Johnson County is a compilation of different communities, each with a desire for its own identity. That becomes a challenge when attempting consistency throughout. There is also a desire to achieve that as well.

Mr. Shukert: These green signs are standard manual uniform traffic control device signs, so they would be standard throughout.

Comm. Elkins: Is there interest at all from someone like MARC to help coordinate a multi-municipality approach to this sort of thing?

Mr. Coleman: They already do through the Metro Green. They've adopted it.

Mr. Anderson: Right now, they're doing an update for the eight counties in both Kansas and Missouri that make up our metropolitan area.

Comm. Strauss: Does the plan get into bicycle and pedestrian paths to Leawood City Park? That would certainly be a major access point.

Mr. Shukert: Yes; probably half of the north-south points all feed into the central trail. Three of the terminuses of the routes are at Leawood City Park. That becomes the bridge.

Mr. Anderson: We have a project website called ActiveLeawood.com. We have posted some initial maps of some of these trails and routes.

Comm. Strauss: I'd love to look through the draft. Some of the solution is land use policy; does the report get into that?

Mr. Shukert: It will, but any thoughts you have about that would be very good.

Comm. Strauss: We've been talking about that with the 135th Street plan.

Comm. Ramsey: Before we leave the bicycle thing, I know these guys are all passionate about it and everything, but the real issue for me is de-conflicting the cars and bicyclists because my neighbors, who use Mission Road between 151st and 135th, are about ready to shoot some bicyclists because Mission Road is two lanes with ditches, and they will be right in the middle of the travel lane. Somebody will get run over one of these days.

Chair Rohlf: Particularly when they ride in large groups.

Mr. Klein: Brian has heard those same comments, and people who are passionate about bikes want to educate those people because they aren't helping the bicyclists' case. They will have fines, but then a diversion program is also being discussed.

2014 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Klein: We've held off on this because we've talked about the 135th Street Community Plan. Currently, we have the 135th Street Corridor Plan that was done in 1997 and which has been an appendix to the Comprehensive Plan all these years. The 135th Street Community Plan would replace that. We want to incorporate that into the Comprehensive Plan. We also have some updates that we would like to keep basic because the 135th Street Community Plan is the primary focus this time. It does conform to the Comprehensive Plan as far as Mixed-Use, which is the corridor between 133rd and 137th. We made a couple of changes to update it to what has happened and what we expect to happen.

Mr. Coleman: You might talk about how some of these got to be Mixed-Use, since it came into being in 2002.

Mr. Klein: The city really embraced the Mixed-Use concept, so there are a number of places in the city that showed potential for the concept, including the 135th Street Corridor. There are many commercial projects along that corridor, both in Overland Park and on the Missouri side as well, so it would not be realistic to develop it all as commercial. Mixed-Use offers more flexibility with office, retail and residential. Park Place one of the reasons the Comprehensive Plan has changed. At the time they started talking to the city, we had no MX-D district; it was not allowed. Mission Farms was the first Mixed-Use Development in Leawood.

Comm. Pateidl: One thing I noticed in the new 135th Street Plan is that they incorporate the old plan from 1996. In 1996, the plan was called The Urban Design and Development Plan, and the concept was to have heavier commercial on the east and west ends and the Mixed-Use concept in the center. When was the decision made, and how was it made that the east and west ends became Mixed-Use, and by virtue of that decision, does that mandate that those components have residential included?

Mr. Klein: The Mixed-Use category requires a residential component at a minimum of 20%. For those areas that are not developed or that have no active plans, they would be required to have a residential component. This changed in 2002, and in 2005, it was expanded to the city's embracing the Mixed-Use. We saw a lot of projects on the 135th Street Corridor with Villaggio, Cornerstone, Market Center and Mission Corner. Eventually, we started seeing these projects fail. The Corbin Development in Overland Park was huge and then crumbled, resurrected, crumbled and then resurrected. This time, it looks like it has some staying power and the momentum to do that. We didn't know about Prairie Fire at that time. We started seeing that commercial development for the entire corridor was not going to work.

Comm. Pateidl: On 135th and Nall on what would be the southeast corner is church property, is it not?

Mr. Coleman: It is Cornerstone.

Mr. Klein: Originally, the church was involved in funding it and getting it going, but it is its own development.

Comm. Pateidl: The Mixed-Use has to have a minimum of 10 acres, and I wonder if that corner is realistic for residential, given what has happened with Prairie Fire across the street. What does that do to encourage or discourage developers from considering projects in Leawood? That is my real concern with this broad brush classification of this ground all as Mixed-Use without some aspect of flexibility and rezoning or consideration of these projects because the environment around it is changing to the point where we will just have a vacant lot for a very long time until there is nothing else to build on.

Comm. Elkins: Mike, I'm curious about your thoughts from a development standpoint because on one hand, it seems like all the capacity is being sucked up into Prairie Fire, which will hinder development across the street. On the other hand, it seems like there is at least a theory there that there is a critical mass with Prairie Fire and that it is natural then to develop to the side except to the extent that Nall is a natural barrier. From a development standpoint, what would be the conventional wisdom: that Prairie Fire sucked up all the capacity?

Comm. Levitan: Yes, unless the density farther south grows. Ironhorse Center to 151st and Nall is a failure. They've had problems keeping tenants, and it is because the density farther south than that needs to catch up. The density right now doesn't support it. On the development side, you think about what you can get financing for, and Mixed-Use is highly risky, which is why developers go for what is financeable. You have to be market-sensitive. The broad brush would make me nervous because we are telling developers they have to fit into a mold and if they don't, they're not welcome. The city does have a certain perception in the development community that it is difficult to work with, so developers go to Overland Park.

Comm. Pateidl: Or Belton or Grandview or Olathe; we've got a lot of competition around us, and if we're not in any hurry to develop this ground, it's fine.

Comm. Ramsey: I'm not arguing one way or the other, but if not Mixed-Use, what then?

Comm. Pateidl: I think more flexibility toward the commercial side, be it office or retail, it cycles with the environment there more than residential.

Mr. Coleman: Just using that particular example, somebody can come in right now and build out the plan that was approved. It doesn't have to be Mixed-Use, so that flexibility is there on that particular site.

Comm. Pateidl: It didn't have a five-year sunset on it?

Mr. Coleman: It's already started construction; they've already met that threshold.

Comm. Elkins: It's like the Oddos with the apartments, going for 23 years.

Mr. Coleman: If they hadn't built and the plan expired, there could be an issue, but they have already started construction and it is already under development. They can complete the plan just like it was approved, but if they want to put in a car wash and a Walmart, it doesn't conform to the approved plan and we won't allow it.

Comm. Pateidl: I fully agree that we should have control over what goes in there or at least a vote on what goes in there, but a requirement of residential by virtue of the Mixed-Use zoning is problematic on the two ends. We can leave it as Mixed-Use as long as we have some understanding that if we're going to have an LDO kit - which I don't really fully understand - part of the kit needs to have some flexibility to get away from the sole concept of Mixed-Use on the exterior ends of the Corridor.

Mr. Klein: One advantage we have is single ownership. Prior to the economic downturn, we were talking about a large Mixed-Use Development. There was so much land with a lot of flexibility as far as where the different uses could go. We've also talked to people with regard to some Mixed-Use Developments with regard to developments that have started and stalled out.

Mr. Coleman: I also think the Mixed-Use helps with the overall development of the Corridor because those rooftops will be missing farther south. If several thousand residents can be injected into the corridor, it helps create the market for at least a part of it.

Comm. Pateidl: I'm a little critical of one of the comments in the plan that says that the city needs to promote residential in order to have the customer base for the retail to work. If this is a public document picked up by a West Coast investor looking to do something in Leawood, will he really want to go in someplace that doesn't have the customer base for a commercial project? I got negative vibes when I read through that.

Mr. Coleman: To me, that doesn't read as a negative vibe; it reads as a market reality.

Comm. Levitan: They'll have their demographic studies well before they get into that, so they'll know if the rooftops are there to support what they want to do.

Comm. Pateidl: What if they're not? Will they not do it?

Comm. Roberson: They won't do it. They won't get financing, either.

Comm. Ramsey: The one thing for me is that Mixed-Use doesn't bother me because since this is the last real piece of developable ground in Leawood, I think we have as much, if not more, flexibility with calling for Mixed-Use than if we had it zoned all commercial or all office or whatever. We've already got some caveats in here with the Cornerstone property. I presume Villaggio is the same way.

Mr. Coleman: I'd have to check the dates, but I would generally say that's right.

Comm. Ramsey: We're just talking here because who knows what will happen. I agree; I want the most flexibility. If there is some other way to do it, I'd be for that. For the time being, I'd be okay with this because we do need a bit more density in our development. All through Johnson County, we are dispersed.

Comm. Pateidl: I don't want to be misunderstood. I believe in the Mixed-Use, and I believe that the lion's share of it will go Mixed-Use. That's probably going to be the most practical use for it. If we're looking at changes in the LDO to be friendly toward developers to encourage them to do this kind of thing, I'd like to see the ability to have some flexibility on projects that may not fit the mold of Mixed-Use but could be a good companion project, particularly on the east and west ends of the deal.

Comm. Elkins: You may have to educate me on how we rezone things, but I continue to believe that one of the real needs in Leawood as our population ages is a pretty significant senior living facility of some sort. I have my own thoughts about what that might look like, but it takes a lot of ground to do the kind of thing that I think would go over in Leawood. As Bill says, the main place we have ground to do that is along the 135th Street Corridor. If we have the map as Mixed-Use all along and I wanted to develop such a facility, would that map chase me away from that idea?

Mr. Klein: Not necessarily; we had an application at Parkway Plaza with a skilled nursing facility. At that time, it was decided that skilled nursing didn't meet the residential component that would use the commercial; however, an independent living might contribute because they would be out and about. I don't think it would be allowed within the MX-D.

Mr. Coleman: We have property in the Corridor where they could build those facilities, and we have people interested.

Comm. Elkins: Part of the plan would require rezoning a piece, wouldn't it?

Mr. Coleman: They would need a Special Use Permit for the facility. Some properties in Villaggio are a possibility as well.

Comm. Elkins: I know it doesn't particularly add to the tax base or anything else, but I think it's a real need in Leawood.

Mr. Coleman: We're talking to them. Some of them are like McDonald's, and if their stock plan doesn't fit the property, they go elsewhere; that's just the way it is.

Comm. Ramsey: I do want to go back to Jim's comment about being developer friendly. I'm going to take the opposite of that. I've worked in communities where we bent over backwards to support developers and paid the price for it in the long run. Again, the reason for my remarks goes back to the lone remaining piece of open ground. I would hope we would be tough as nails on anybody coming in here because this is our one and only last chance to get it right. After that, it will be nothing but infill. I know Leawood has a reputation for being difficult. My response is, "So what? You don't like it? Don't come here."

Comm. Pateidl: That's what I say. If we're not in any hurry to get it developed, we'll let it sit for 30 years; it'll be the only place left and will get built on. It'll get built the way we want it. That's one of the questions we need to ask Governing Body as far as implementation of this plan is concerned. What is the desire? What is the time frame envisioned as being meaningful to the community?

Mr. Coleman: The previous Governing Bodies have already answered that question because long before I came here, the Governing Body had turned down multiple different commercial developments in the Corridor. They turned down a Mercedes dealership and others because they didn't fit.

Comm. Pateidl: The Mercedes dealership was going to go right into the heart of what the 96 Urban Design talked about and never should have been proposed. That's a perfect example of what Bill is saying. We don't want it, and we won't do it here.

Mr. Coleman: The 135th Street Plan is saying what we do want rather than what we don't want.

Comm. Pateidl: Then answer what we do want within a time frame.

Mr. Coleman: I think within the next 20 years because that's what this plan was for.

Comm. Pateidl: We've now got 17 years of experience with basically the exact same plan.

Mr. Coleman: I don't think it's the exact same plan.

Comm. Pateidl: The only real change is moving the Mixed-Use to the east and west end. The rest of it, even down to streetscapes and lighting requirements, is almost the same plan from 1996. It's a different concept with different pictures and aspects, but it is the same plan. Have we come to where we want to be? If we have, it's fine. We're not doing anything new here.

Mr. Coleman: We looked at the overall map because a lot of this had Mixed-Use on some areas, and we wanted to revisit those. Some of it seemed not to make too much sense because the parcels already had development or were too small.

Mr. Klein: A lot of it is taking some areas designated as Mixed-Use and realizing it probably is not going to happen. Near the Ward Parkway shopping center is the tunnel under State Line, and a bike path is being discussed. We've had interest from time to time, and we feel a medium-density residential might actually offer a nice buffer between the single-family subdivision and the commercial.

Mr. Coleman: This is one of the properties people have talked about possibly being an independent living facility. We wanted to remove that Mixed-Use designation on this piece of property. It's about 12 acres.

Comm. Levitan: Ward Parkway also separated itself with the Target.

Mr. Coleman: It's been released from the necessity to be associated with Ward Parkway.

Mr. Klein: We also want to talk about 103rd and State Line. This was designated as Mixed-Use, and we feel it would be difficult to have a residential component. There are a lot of different uses, and many are not technically allowed within the BP [Business Park] zoning district; however, it might fit pretty well within General Retail or something similar.

Comm. Pateidl: That makes sense.

Comm. Levitan: That's a 30-year plan. Someone needs to buy those properties, raze it, bring it out of the flood plain and develop it, but that area will be that way forever.

Mr. Coleman: Those buildings do come up for sale periodically. The flood plain is probably the biggest hindrance to redevelopment.

Mr. Klein: We'd also like to talk about Town Center Plaza, which was also designated as Mixed-Use. At some point, it was a possibility that Park Place could bleed across to Town Center Plaza; however, the owners of Town Center have indicated future plans of a continuation of a shopping center with no intentions of adding a residential component. So much of the site is developed as well. We are showing Plaza Pointe Development as going from Retail/Office to Mixed-Use. The reason to take it to Mixed-Use is if any redevelopment came in, it would be consistent with the rest of the Corridor.

Comm. Roberson: You would require residential, then?

Mr. Klein: Yes, if a developer tore down buildings and wanted to redo it.

Comm. Strauss: All the properties are developed except for one?

Mr. Klein: Yes, and it has approval, so chances are that it probably won't be considered for redevelopment soon.

Comm. Pateidl: How big a piece of ground is the vacant piece?

Mr. Klein: The vacant piece is 2 acres.

Comm. Pateidl: If you're going to change it to Mixed-Use, doesn't that take 10.3 acres?

Mr. Klein: Any development is supposed to have 10 acres.

Comm. Pateidl: I wouldn't object to it, but I don't see the advantage of changing it from Retail/Office to Mixed-Use in that environment. I don't understand.

Mr. Klein: The only reason we would is if someone decided to raze and redevelop the area.

Comm. Strauss: What if they expand a building by more than 30%?

Mr. Klein: Any expansion more than 5% requires a new Preliminary Plan. This building is close to its F.A.R. [Floor Area Ratio] allowed for the development.

Comm. Levitan: Has Town Center talked about densifying the north side?

Mr. Coleman: They have but in a retail sense.

Comm. Levitan: I know they looked at others.

Mr. Coleman: Right now, they are talking about essentially two pad sites and a possible expansion of Macy's.

Mr. Klein: We also want to talk about the area that had the Lucas Building proposed on the triangular-shaped property. This is in the Corridor but would be part of another development.

Mr. Coleman: It is just a piece of property that is not well suited for development because of its shape and size.

Comm. Pateidl: That's smart; it gives them flexibility with commercial or residential.

Mr. Klein: We also want to talk about Christ Community Evangelical Church and the ground designated as Mixed-Use because they indicated a desire to do some residential apartments, office and retail. It is our understanding that it has gone away.

Comm. Pateidl: They never went to plan?

Mr. Klein: They never went to plan. They talked to us in pre-application meetings and then never came back. The city purchased property to be part of Ironwoods Park and is looking at different uses within the park. We want to change it from Open Space Private and Low Density Residential to Open Space Public so it matches and reflects the fact that the city purchased the property and intends to put a park there.

Mr. Anderson: Are you going to exclude the cul-de-sacs?

Mr. Klein: The line isn't exactly accurate; we can clean that up. Those are the changes to the Comprehensive Plan as far as designations. Additionally, we would like to update the numbers. Some of the land for the various zoning districts has changed since the last time it was updated, so we would like to update those numbers. We also updated the dates to reflect the current year as well as the tables.

Chair Rohlf: When was this done the last time?

Mr. Klein: It was a little over a year.

Chair Rohlf: It's been done more frequently than it used to be.

Mr. Klein: We've been pretty good as far as getting it reviewed each year. We delayed this one because we were waiting for the 135th Street Community Plan. We plan on bringing the Comprehensive Plan and the 135th Street Plan to you in the May meeting.

Comm. Strauss: Some of the individual goals get updated. How often do you go out to the public and get feedback?

Mr. Klein: That's something we might want to talk about as far as holding public meetings. The updates that we have done most recently were after the 2010 Census. We've updated land uses and have looked at goals and objectives.

Mr. Coleman: We've had public meetings for 135th Street, which we explained as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Comm. Strauss: I go back to the Bike Plan. Is a sample of 250 people representative of the community? I know it's hard to get people to public meetings. Does social media help with that?

Comm. Elkins: The turnout for the 135th Street Plan was discouraging as far as I was concerned.

Mr. Coleman: It started out good and then shrank to a certain size and then just stayed there.

Comm. Elkins: Social media did okay but wasn't huge as far as getting interest.

Mr. Coleman: You have 10,000-12,000 households in Leawood, and we didn't even get 5%.

Comm. Elkins: It's because they weren't mad.

Comm. Pateidl: What is the status for efforts for an implementation plan for this thing?

Mr. Klein: As far as I know, we do plan on going out for another grant for the 135th Street Plan.

Mr. Coleman: Mid America Regional Council is supposed to make an announcement in June for a new call for the Sustainable Communities Initiative. I'll know more then when they send that out. Our plan is to go and apply for another grant to do the implementation part of the plan, which will be more detailed about how things will work and the parking.

Comm. Pateidl: On the first night when it was introduced, Scott set a time frame that by December, he wanted to have the plan implemented and we were going to have these implementation meetings, etc. I just wondered what the status of that was. Are we going to have meetings? What is expected of us? How can we participate?

Mr. Coleman: It won't be too different probably from the last go-around except that it will be more detailed.

Comm. Pateidl: The last go-around when the consultant read to us?

Mr. Coleman: I'm talking about from the beginning. If we get the grant, we will look to hire another consultant to do the implementation plan. Then we'll have a series of meetings over a year. We'll probably take some of the ones recommended to be adopted into the LDO and look at them in detail. Then we'll make recommendations for adoption of those into the LDO.

Comm. Roberson: Is any sort of cost benefit analysis ever going to be done as to how much the 135th Street Corridor would cost to implement?

Mr. Coleman: Cost benefit per development?

Comm. Roberson: There are a lot of suggestions in that about streets, trees and parking. Are there any cost estimates prepared? The reason I ask is that it's a pretty extensive program, so who's going to pay for it?

Mr. Coleman: The vast majority is paid by the developer. They pay for the streets, sidewalks, landscaping and lighting, just like all other developments.

Comm. Ramsey: You've got to remember that there are TDDs and CIDs.

Mr. Coleman: Financing mechanisms would be explored as well.

Comm. Roberson: From a development standpoint, it's a significant expense to put those improvements in.

Mr. Coleman: You can see examples on 135th Street of people doing the development who got ahead of themselves and put in a lot of the infrastructure prior to having the development in place to support it, and they turned it all back over to the bank.

Comm. Levitan: Is the city interested in coming up with some kind of specific incentive? Obviously, I know abatements are on the table, but whether it's TDD or something specifically for that area.

Mr. Coleman: That is something we definitely want to explore.

Comm. Levitan: It's probably best to address that up-front because I think a lot of people will walk away from that because of the infrastructure costs.

Mr. Coleman: I think a lot of it depends on whether the development incorporates public streets or doesn't. Often, the developers want control of everything on the streets so that they can manage the overall development later on to their satisfaction; whereas, if the street is public, some of that control is lost. If somebody wanted to do a protest in Park Place, they could tell them to leave because it's private property; whereas, if it's public streets, they cannot do that. There's a tradeoff there, but we should explore it because the type of development we're talking about would take a Van Tuyl Trust or something similar to help.

Comm. Levitan: It's a pretty limited pool of people.

Mr. Coleman: Particularly in Kansas City, it's limited.

Comm. Pateidl: In the Comprehensive Plan, updating the original Urban Design and Development Plan, there were comments about TIF and STAR Bonds being available. Since the Comprehensive Plan developed in '08 and '10, have there been any projects considered with some element of public financing?

Mr. Coleman: Park Place has instruments of financing, as does Town Center Crossing. They have Transportation Development Districts.

Comm. Pateidl: We've not done any TIF or STAR or any of that?

Mr. Coleman: The Council is not sympathetic to doing TIF financing.

Comm. Pateidl: Is the Council not sympathetic to the CID? I'm going by the newspaper articles.

Mr. Coleman: You can't believe everything you read in the paper. I think the Council has mixed views on all of that, just like people in here have mixed views about things. If they weren't somewhat interested or supportive of having a CID, they wouldn't have put the policy in place in the first place.

Comm. Pateidl: When was that policy put in place, and do we know the ordinance number.

Mr. Coleman: 2 ½-3 years ago, and I don't have the ordinance number. It says that commercial developments over 20 years old are eligible for CID but only for exterior improvements.

Comm. Levitan: There is not a single municipality that I know of that allows it to be used for TI [Tenant Improvement] or inside, which is realistic.

Mr. Coleman: In the HyVee situation, they were told that we can't spend the \$1 million on the interior but that we could entertain the \$3.5 million for the exterior. They said they would think about it and never came back. Then in August of last year, they withdrew the application. We didn't hear a word from them until earlier this year.

Comm. Pateidl: I think they played their cards very well because if it's underperforming, they either remodel or close it.

MEETING ADJOURNED