

**METRO**



# planning NEWS



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## Message from the Director

I am excited to announce that in a ceremony on Capitol Hill on July 12, Mrs. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States and Honorary Chair of Preserve America, acknowledged 20 newly designated Preserve America Communities, including Wichita. Barbara Hammond and Kathy Morgan of the Wichita Historic Preservation Office, Planning Department, attended the Washington DC event and received the commendation from the First Lady.

Preserve America is a national initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy the country's cultural and natural heritage. Wichita received the designation based on documentation of the many preservation-related projects in the city. In part, these projects include 1) Museums that maintain historical and genealogical collections, offer educational programs, and are housed in historic buildings, 2) Preservation of entire districts such as the Warehouse and Jobbers National Historic District in Old Town, and 3) 100 individual buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Wichita is the second city in Kansas to achieve this designation!



**Top: Barbara Hammond, First Lady Laura Bush, Congressman Todd Tiahrt**  
**Bottom: Kathy Morgan, Congressman Tiahrt and Barbara Hammond**

## Dunbar Theater Revitalization Efforts Moving Forward

Fundraising efforts are now in full swing for the revitalization of the historic Dunbar Theater located at 1007 N. Cleveland in the heart of the McAdams neighborhood. POWER Community Development Corporation obtained clear title to the property earlier this summer and was also recently awarded a \$300,000 federal earmark grant through Rep. Todd Tiahrt. These are significant steps forward in the creation of a community-based cultural and performing arts center that will serve residents of central northeast Wichita. Anyone interested in contributing either time or money towards this revitalization project is invited to contact James Arbertha, Executive Director, POWER CDC, (316) 267-3036.



**An historic photo showing a Christmas party at the Dunbar**

## *Bringing Nature and Conservation Together*

By Christy Rodriguez

According to the Wichita Business Journal, the Sedgwick County Zoo, Cargill Learning Center is one of Wichita's first buildings to incorporate Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) techniques. Last year, not only did the Center expand, it became a "Green Building," as a result of extensive improvements, incorporating environmentally friendly construction materials including recycled glass in the floors and countertops, recyclable carpet squares, and energy advantage Low-E windows to optimize solar control--reducing heat gain and increasing light transmittance.



The 15,000 square foot Center boasts four permanent classrooms, a large auditorium, a library, interior and exterior gathering places and a channel that connects the Center to the interior of the Zoo.

Schan e Anderson, the Curator of Education for Sedgwick County Zoo, stated that "The Cargill Learning Center brings nature and conservation together." Not only is the building an environmental showcase, the unique design of the building is based on the equiangular spiral--a shape found throughout nature such as in horns, tusks, leaves, and shells. The focal point of the building is a large rotunda with a striking cobalt blue design on the floor. Contact Schan e Anderson for details about the Center at 316-266-8214.

## *Wichita's New LED Sign Ordinance*

By Christy Rodriguez and Kurt Schroeder

During the past year, Wichita City Council members voiced concerns about certain types of illuminated electronic message advertising signs, primarily those using what is known as "LED", "plasma" or "wedgebase" technology to create changeable copy, animation and/or other moving graphics. This technology is still evolving, but has significantly increased in the Wichita market over the past three to five years. These signs, while significantly more energy efficient than older, incandescent bulb-lighted signs, are also significantly brighter, with much greater ability to program more complex moving images and graphic animations.

Concerns have included 1) excessive brightness, especially at night (generating some complaints from neighboring property owners or adjoining neighborhoods); 2) general aesthetic concerns, as related to use of such sign technology in historic districts or within the environs of historic buildings or districts; and 3) possible traffic

safety issues due to distractions of extremely bright, changing or moving advertising images.

On August 14, 2007, the Wichita City Council adopted Sign Code amendments based on input received from District Advisory Boards and sign industry representatives, as well as direction provided by the City Council. Revisions to the Sign Code include:

- New permit submittal and approval requirements
- Specific maximum nighttime brightness levels
- Historic preservation requirements for LED signs
- An administrative adjustment procedure allowing up to a 30% variance to the maximum allowed brightness for some nighttime conditions
- A requirement that existing LED signs be brought into compliance with new dimming regulations by January 31, 2008

## *Revisions to the Zoning Area of Influence*

By Dale Miller

The Current Plans Division of the Metropolitan Area Planning Department recently completed an intensive review of Sedgwick County's "zoning area of influence" (ZAOI) boundaries that has culminated in revised ZAOI boundaries for many of the County's cities. The review of ZAOI boundaries was triggered by changes in the city limits of a number of the Sedgwick County's cities. In some cases, a city had annexed beyond its ZAOI boundary, or revisions were needed to align ZAOI boundaries with projected urban service delivery areas.

In 1985, when Sedgwick County adopted countywide zoning, all of the cities of the second and third class except Eastborough, were granted the authority to review and comment on zoning applications located within close proximity to each cities' boundaries. When a zoning or conditional use application is filed within a city's ZAOI, that city's planning commission must be given the opportunity to review and comment on the application. If the city's planning commission recommends denial, then it requires a unanimous vote of approval by the Board of County Commissioners to override the planning commission's recommendation of denial.

The unanimous vote requirement is a significant hurdle to overcome. Since 1987, planning staff is aware of only four cases where the County Commission approved an application after a city has recommended denial.

Changes were not made to the ZAOI boundaries for Mt. Hope, Andale, Cheney, Garden Plain, Clearwater, Derby, Goddard or Mulvane but were made to all the other cities. The modifications were made only after discussions beginning in February 2006 between planning staff and each of the cities. The Metropolitan Area Planning Commission then made recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. County Commissioners Unruh and Parks held special meetings with some city representatives to mediate overlapping boundary requests. At the end of these meetings, agreements had been reached for most of the cities, and the Commissioners were able to unanimously adopt a revised map on July 11, 2007.

# Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization News



Articles by Brent Holper and Scott Dunakey  
For more information regarding the Wichita  
Area Metropolitan Planning Organization  
contact Nancy Harvieux at 268-4391

## WAMPO Area Bridges

Since the I-35W bridge collapse in Minnesota, and Wichita’s recent closure of the Broadway Bridge near 37th St. South, bridges have become a hot topic and of great concern to the general public within the WAMPO region. As we listen to the local and national media, we hear the terms structurally deficient and functionally obsolete commonly used, but what does that mean? Why are bridge inspections so important? And what does WAMPO have to do with these issues?

A bridge is considered structurally deficient when there is a significant amount of deterioration and the load capacity is reduced. For example, if the condition of a bridge has declined to the point that it can no longer safely carry the amount of weight for which it was originally designed, it would be considered structurally deficient. A functionally obsolete bridge is not necessarily structurally deficient, but its design is considered to be outdated. Such bridges typically have inadequate design, narrow shoulders or insufficient clearance underneath the bridge. An example of a functionally obsolete bridge is a bridge with fewer lanes than the adjoining road sections.

To ensure that the public is using safe and reliable infrastructure, the U.S. DOT requires that all bridges must be inspected and given a sufficiency rating every two years. A bridge’s sufficiency rating is determined by an objective set of rating criteria that judges its overall condition. The bridge inspection results provide the basis for the “National Bridge Inventory: Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program Selection List” (R&R List), which is published annually by the Kansas Department of Transportation. To be included on the R&R List, a bridge must receive a sufficiency rating of 50 or less and be deemed structurally deficient or functionally obsolete. Only bridges listed on the R&R List are eligible to receive federal bridge funding. WAMPO is currently working with local units of government with concerns about funding bridge repairs and replacements through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). For further information about bridges, please visit the KDOT bridge website at: <http://www.ksdot.org/KsBridges/KsBridges.asp>.



Broadway bridge near 37th St. South

## on the **GO** with **WAMPO**: New Website

As WAMPO strives for excellence, one of the initial steps is to create an identity of it’s own. WAMPO would like to invite you to take a look at the new WAMPO website at [www.wampoks.org](http://www.wampoks.org). This website now includes up-to-date information about WAMPO activities, events, public meetings and publications.

## Upcoming WAMPO Events

Keep your eyes and ears open for WAMPO events this fall. A wide variety of meetings, (open to the public) will be held to discuss the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Public Participation Plan (PPP). The remaining 2007 public meeting dates for the Transportation Policy Body (TPB) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) are listed below. We encourage anyone available to attend these meetings. For an up-to-date listing of all WAMPO public meetings, go to [www.wampoks.org](http://www.wampoks.org) or e-mail Vester Adams at [vadams@wichita.gov](mailto:vadams@wichita.gov).

TPB Meetings (3-5pm)	TAC Meetings (10am-2pm)
September 11th, 2007	September 24th, 2007
October 9th, 2007	October 29th, 2007
November 13th, 2007	November 26th, 2007
December 11th, 2007	

**Transportation Enhancement Program**

Grant applications are due to WAMPO on **OCTOBER 31, 2007** by 5PM. Visit the WAMPO website for details about this program and how to apply for funding:  
<http://www.wampoks.org/Publications/Special+Projects.htm>

## *New City Administrator in Bel Aire*



Ty Lasher is the new City Administrator for the City of Bel Aire. Ty is a native Kansan, born in Gardner, raised on a farm outside of McLouth near Lawrence, and received a BA in Agribusiness from Mid America Nazarene University in Olathe. Ty's career in local government began in 1987 as a department director for Jefferson County, Kansas. In 1992, he moved to Hutchinson to take the same department head position with Reno County. While being employed full time, Ty worked towards a Master of Public Administration at Wichita State University. Upon graduation in the fall of 2001, he accepted a position as the City Administrator for Cheney. This past July, Ty accepted the City Administrator position with the City of Bel Aire. Ty said, "I have spent the last 15 years in south central Kansas and have had the privilege of working in Sedgwick County with two great cities the last six years." Ty is married to Denise and has a 10-year old son, Alex, and a 7-year old daughter, Jenna.

## *Farewell to Don in Derby*

City Planner, Don Losew is retiring on September 7th after a 10-year career with the City of Derby. Prior to his employment in Derby, Don worked in the Advanced Plans and Current Plans Divisions of the Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department for 23 years.



Don grew up in Chicago and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Geography in 1969 from the University of Illinois. Don graduated with a Master of Geography in 1971 from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and started a doctoral program at Ohio State University for three years before deciding it was time to quit being a student and take a full-time position with the Wichita-Sedgwick County Metropolitan Area Planning Department. Don said, "When I started working for the MAPD, it was in the old Brown Building on Broadway, and I worked with Phil Nelson, the old City Manager in Derby, Jim Heinicke, the present City Manager in Newton, Mike Vinson and Forrest Nagley, both currently working with the Wichita Transit." Losew said "I plan to give up the daily grind and do the things I want to do... maybe go snow skiing in Colorado a few times a year." Best Wishes Don!



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VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Planning/](http://www.wichita.gov/CityOffices/Planning/)



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