

### Vision without Action is a Dream.

Action without Vision is simply passing time.

# Action with Vision is making a positive difference.

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### The Ardmore 2020 Visioning Process

Ardmore has long been recognized as one of the premiere communities in the State of Oklahoma. Changing times require that we "take stock" of our community's strengths and challenges to create the future for Ardmore problem solving approaches of the 70's and 80's are not sufficient to meet today's increasingly complex problems and challenges. If communities are to effectively address challenges, all sectors need to work in concert toward common ends. Some communities allow the future to happen to them; others create a future. Similar to the model used in the "Ardmore Tomorrow" community visioning process spearheaded by the Chamber in 1998, the process utilized is called "Focus on Your Future: A Strategic Approach to Community Improvement" and is based on a model used by the National Civic League to help communities across the country reinvent their future.

The Ardmore Chamber of Commerce initiated discussion about a Community Visioning Project in June of 2008. The Steering Committee of Ardmore 2020 began meeting in September, 2008 to initiate planning for the process. Five Community Visioning Sessions beginning January 15, 2009, involving 275 area residents met to begin the task of crafting the vision of Ardmore 2020, "Action Today for Ardmore's Tomorrow."

### Ardmore 2020 - Key Components

The first step in designing the future of our community was creating the capacity for change. The structure included the creation of an effective forum for citizen involvement. The structure of the Community Sessions included:

- Collaborative problem solving and consensus decision making
- Creation of a problem solving group that is as diverse as the community and represents all major interests and perspectives in Ardmore
- Outreach to all those in the community that could add value to the decision making process as well as engaging their support
- Utilization of objective data on the community

The next step was the development of the vision for the community followed by the creation of goals and actions plans for obtaining the visions created during the five sessions.

Implementation follows completion of the plan. This will be the step by step progression of changing the current reality to the Ardmore of 2020.

### ARDMORE 2020 TIMELINE

Initial Approval June 2008 Steering Committee Meetings September - November, 2008 Community Survey November 2008 **Initial Community Session** January 15, 2009 Second Community Session January 29, 2009 Third Community Session February 12,2009 Fourth Community Session February 26, 2009 Final Community Session March 12, 2009 Report to the Community April 1, 2009

### Community Facilities/Tourism/Events

VISION: Ardmore's easy access to major highways and numerous regional lakes provide excellent leisure opportunities for residents and visitors. Parks, trails, golf courses, performing venues, historic areas and many festivals provide unlimited opportunities.

#### **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

The Ardmore community boasts 19 parks located throughout the city, however new amenities such as splash pads and walking trails are needed to allow the fullest utilization. Many of parks lack convenient access and safety considerations limit their use. The YMCA is an extremely popular facility but it is outdated and the current location doesn't allow for expansion.

Goal: To have the best facilities in Southern Oklahoma for family related activities including the construction of a YMCA that is accessible to all residents and the best parks and recreation program in the State.

### Objectives and Plans of Action:

- Construction of a new YMCA facility by the year 2014 on land to be donated by the city at Regional Park. The estimated cost to construct the facility is \$10,000,000.00. A community assessment for a new facility has been completed, however a comprehensive feasibility study will be completed by August 2010 (with the assistance of grant funding). The Capital Campaign will begin the summer 2009 and be completed by the fall of 2010. The construction of a new YMCA for Southern Oklahoma will be complete by January 2012.
- Provide better access and safety; an assessment of the needs at each park and the trail system will be coordinated by the Director of Parks and Recreation and be completed by August of 2009. Subsequent to the receipt of the information, improvements will be made including the installation of proper lighting and an emergency phone system. The improvements will be coordinated through the City of Ardmore and should be completed by the summer of 2011.
- Addition of a park in southwest Ardmore will be addressed by determining a location and consulting with the appropriate officials in the Parks and Recreation Department and the city to create the design and complete the project. The identification of a location for the park in southwest Ardmore is scheduled to be completed by the fall of 2009.

#### **TOURISM**

The scenic beauty, abundance of natural resources and great venues make Ardmore a favorite destination for many visitors. The addition of hotel rooms provides the opportunity to market to larger groups and offer more options during their stay. Ardmore's downtown area has the potential to be a key component in the creation of a "destination" identity for the area.

- The creation of an identity for the community to provide a consistent marketing message. This will be accomplished through an assessment coordinated by a group of interested individuals and involving golfers, equestrians, water sports enthusiasts, meeting planners, tour operators and local leaders. This assessment will be conducted during August 2009. Based on the information received, further action will be determined.
- The creation of events that will attract visitors and participants to the area. 1). This objective will include the recruitment of a 10 day \$100,000 NCHA event including assistance with the funding to be secured by March 2010. 2). The creation of regular outdoor events in the downtown area that are several days in duration and will attract overnight visitors.
- <u>Create a Christmas season toy convention</u> to be held at the Ardmore Convention Center in conjunction
  with the Festival of Lights Drive Thru. The initial Christmas Toy Convention would be held in November
  of 2010.

## Education: Early Childhood, Lifelong Learning, K-12, Four Year University, and Workforce

VISION: Ardmore has developed the most efficient and productive method for delivery of education services. Innovative programs, rigor, accountability, modern facilities, quality teachers and a high level of parental involvement and public support help our schools achieve. Our well-rounded programs serve all ages. Pre-school programs prepare our children for the rigor they will encounter in the K-12 system. Our local Technology Center and four-year university are partners that provide a seamless education system. Life-long learning opportunities provide for continual upgrading and advancement.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD

The Ardmore Community recognizes the importance of quality early childhood education and childcare. The availability of childcare services in the area is limited and solutions need to be formulated. The quality of the daycare is identified as an essential ingredient in the success of children as they enter school.

### Objectives and Plans of Action:

- All early childhood/pre-kindergarten programs and childcare facilities whether public or private are state accredited. Upon receipt of the state accreditation, Advanced National Accreditation will be complete in 2012.
- <u>Implement the Department of Human Services STARS Program.</u> All area childcare facilities will be evaluated using the Early Childhood Evaluation Rating Scale by 2012.

#### LIFELONG LEARNING

The quality of life is enhanced with opportunities to learn throughout our lives and Ardmore is no exception. In a community rich in cultural and educational opportunities, these resources can be coordinated to provide all of the citizens of Ardmore access to learning opportunities regardless of their age and educational background.

Goal: Establish a system that affords additional educational opportunities and soft skills development for citizens regardless of education levels or pursuits.

- Expansion of public programs such as Profiles and Perspectives by 10% annually. The planning for this project will involve a task force of interested citizens, senior citizens, representatives of organizations that historically have provided such programming (Noble/Goddard/SW Historical Museum). Planning will begin summer of 2009 and be implemented in the fall of 2010.
- Provide basic education programs for adults, specifically a program that promotes financial literacy by fall, 2009.
- Raise public awareness. A comprehensive marketing/PR campaign to reach a significant portion of the population. An area campaign to be designed by June of 2009 to promote fall events.

### **K-12 EDUCATION**

Ardmore has long been recognized as a community that embraces innovation. The Education Initiative, Cornerstone, launched the utilization of benchmark testing at all grade levels, recruitment incentives to attract the best educators and performance based recognition and rewards to acknowledge those educators who successfully impact student achievement. We recognize that significant adjustments must be made in the manner in which we educate our children if we wish to remain competitive in the global world. Our students deserve the best in educators, facilities and technology and their education must prepare students to be successful at the next level whether it be higher education or work force.

Goal: Create an efficient education system for Ardmore area with premiere programs tailoring educational services to meet individual student's needs to prepare students for higher education/workforce.

- Expand the collaboration of area schools through community initiatives. Create a team of administrators, teachers, parents and other business and community leaders to assist in the identification of areas where this effort would be most effective, i.e. AP Classes, arts etc. This team will be formed by the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year. A component of this exercise will be an evaluation of the current Cornerstone Program to determine the feasibility of continuation after the initial funding is depleted (2011).
- Renovation or replacement of existing facilities in order to bring them to a standard that facilitates student learning potential. A list of proposed improvements needs to be prioritized no later than October of 2009. A comprehensive public information campaign needs to be undertaken to provide accurate information to school patrons and area citizens on the need for facility improvements.
- Consider the future of the ½ cent sales tax that will expire in 2013. A committee of school officials, city officials and the Chamber will assess the needs of each district and propose future funding. This should be completed in the first half of 2011 in order to allow sufficient time to prepare for an election in 2012, if continuation of the tax is proposed.
- <u>Increased parental involvement at all levels providing our students with enhanced opportunities for academic success.</u> Implement a plan incorporating strategies and incentives to increase parental involvement. Focus groups of principals, parents, PTA/PTO organizations and community leaders will be formed at the beginning of the 2009-2010 academic year and the strategies implemented in the 2010-2011 academic year.
- Increase the number of teachers in the area with a masters degree to 70% of all certified staff. Additional training and education will increase the potential for this objective to be obtained by 2012. Community resources can be utilized in order to facilitate the training and additional education.

### FOUR YEAR UNIVERSITY

The Ardmore Higher Education Center has provided the residents of southern Oklahoma with access to college classes for 35 years. This system served the citizens of the area well for many years. In response to changes in the needs of our population and to enhance the ability to attract industry and qualified workers, it is imperative Ardmore has a four year university.

Goal: To become a branch of a University and construct the necessary facilities.

### Objectives and Plans of Action:

- Secure a location and basic premises for the university. Involve the members of the Ardmore Higher Education Board, City Leaders and the Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education in securing a location by December 2009.
- <u>Legislative Authorization</u>. Create a task force to educate the community and lobby the legislature for approval in the 2010 Oklahoma Legislative Session.
- A Capital Campaign to finance the construction of the facility. The initial evaluation and preparation for the campaign will be undertaken by early 2010. Upon approval of the legislature, the campaign will be held, ending November 1, 2010.
- The construction and completion of the initial phase of the campus. Creation of plans and specifications, will be completed and bids for the project will be due in August of 2012. The relocation of all programs to the new campus is scheduled for the beginning of fall classes in 2014.

#### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

It is imperative that local business and industry have resources to provide the training necessary to have proficient and productive employees. The constant evolution of business and skill requirements create an ongoing need throughout a worker's career. Oklahoma's Career Technology System is recognized nationally and should be a key component of the plan in addition to the Ardmore Higher Education Center.

Goal: Establish a system that affords work force skills development for citizens regardless of educational levels or pursuits.

- Implement programs to meet the needs of area employers within one year through the review of previous studies completed by SOTC and local industry. A survey of area employers should be completed by August 1, 2009. This data would be reviewed by the workforce committee and programs necessary to meet the needs identified by October 2009; with development of programs by December 2009. The final steps of the process will include obtaining the necessary funding and implementation of the programs by February 2010.
- <u>Increase the well-trained workforce by 8% each year.</u> This would be accomplished utilizing many of the steps outlined above and would be a process evaluated on a regular basis, perhaps as often as annually to insure the correct programs are in place. This step would begin in April 2010.

### Community Infrastructure

VISION: Ardmore's unique approach to finding regional solutions has assisted our city as well as nearby communities in meeting infrastructure challenges for the future. Our modern multi-modal inter and intrastate transportation systems provide for efficient, easy and energy saving flow of traffic. Our water systems are adequate to serve area needs on a consistent basis for the next 50 years. Sewer, solid waste, fire suppression, security and police; as well as other services are coordinated for maximum efficiency in our area.

Ardmore, similar to many cities of its size and age is faced with a deteriorating infrastructure system with inadequate resources to replace items as they break. In addition, the transportation system in the community does not provide the adequate traffic corridors, and lacks a loop around the city. The storm drainage system lacks critical capacity and the water and sewer systems, while having both recently been updated, will not be adequate to serve the anticipated future growth. Water has been identified as the most precious of resources of the 21st century and it is imperative that we continue to plan for the continuance of an abundant supply and conveyance system.

Goal: To have a secure infrastructure that will allow for future growth and prosperity including water, sewer and public transportation.

- Repair and replace 5% of the city streets by 2011, utilizing the plan currently in place by the city and creating a process to inform the public and accept input.
- Reduce the number of waste/water line breaks by 5% per year by 2011. Identify, prioritize and prepare a list of the infrastructure in need of replacement or significant repair. The annual budget should address these projects in a priority fashion to the extent that funding is available and where the need exceeds this amount, alternative sources should be identified.
- <u>Identify future water needs.</u> Complete a study of future growth trends and subsequent use requirements, as well as the potential sources of the water; including storage and distribution needs. The initial phase should be completed in 2009 and the final phase in 2013.
- The City must meet DEQ requirements by reducing inflow and infiltration. Develop a strategy and funding plan needed to meet 2020 compliance requirements.

### Economic Development/Local Jobs

VISION: Ardmore has a nationally recognized program that assures the future economic viability of our community. Our support system allows for existing businesses to expand and modernize in order to remain competitive in a world economy. Entrepreneurial development is encouraged through a myriad of programs in the community that foster growth. New business and industry attraction is centered on advanced manufacturing and international logistics; sectors that are bringing higher paying jobs to Ardmore.

Ardmore's reputation for a vibrant economy and a business friendly community is recognized nationwide. The innovative method in which the economy has been diversified has resulted in the use of Ardmore as a model for other communities to follow. The face of economic development is changing to meet the challenges and opportunities of a global economy and the utilization of talent. Today's challenge is to attract the talent and recruit the industry that will create the Ardmore of 2020. The introduction of technology and globalization require constant re-evaluation of opportunities and challenges and this must be an on-going process to remain competitive.

Goal: The continuation of Ardmore's position as the premiere location for business and industry utilizing the Noble Foundation as an anchor for growing research companies.

- <u>Increase the number of skilled job positions by 2% per year.</u> The greatest asset in the accomplishment of this objective is the continuing work of the Ardmore Development Authority and their aggressive targeted marketing program and industrial site development. Opportunities are identified and can be matched with the assets offered in our area and involvement of local industry leaders.
- Expansion of existing local industry. Strong relationships must be maintained in order to accurately identify companies that have opportunity for growth and expansion and partner with them to meet those critical needs; such as workforce recruitment and training, access to capital and regulatory issues.
- Continuation of the ¼ cent sales tax for Economic Development. In order for the Ardmore Development Authority to continue in its mission of economic prosperity, it will be necessary to continue to support those efforts financially. Currently, the ADA receives the proceeds of a ¼ cent sales tax for industry recruitment and support. This tax will end in 2013 and efforts to extend this funding need to begin by 2011.

### Retail Development/Re-Development

VISION: Ardmore is the trade center for South Central Oklahoma. As new retail centers develop, older centers are re-developed and upgraded thus providing shopping experiences from historical boutique stores to large shopping emporiums. Ardmore has revitalized its downtown through the creation of a re-development district. A haven for the arts and historic preservation, Ardmore's downtown also is a growing entertainment area that has created an atmosphere conducive to attracting "urban dwellers."

Ardmore is the center of a trade area encompassing five counties and over 125,000 people. Area attractions and hotel expansions are providing more opportunities for visitors. The addition of retail sectors and family friendly entertainment venues make Ardmore a destination for shoppers.

Goal: Create shopping areas that are distinct and will thrive on Commerce, Broadway, 12th Street and Washington along with a vibrant downtown district. Downtown will be redeveloped to include retail, recreation, arts/entertainment and education facilities.

- Attract a new entertainment venue by 2010 and one new venue each year for 5 years. Create a task force of community volunteers to conduct a survey to determine the type/variety of entertainment desired and feasible. Options will be prioritized and recruitment of the event or venue initiated.
- Improve appearance of existing facades. A resource guide for access and assistance will be developed to obtain facade grants. Efforts to increase funding for these programs and expand the boundaries outside of the traditional central business district will be required. Identification of properties that would qualify for assistance should be complete and contact made with owners/tenants to inform them of the availability of funds by 2011.
- Attract national chains. This process will involve the creation of a committee to identify the national chains that will compliment or enhance current retail offerings. This process should be concluded by the fall of 2009. A marketing program specifically designed to attract national chains will be initiated in 2010..

### Re-Cycling/Beautification

VISION: Ardmore is a green community with many LEED certified facilities. Attractive entrances invite visitors and an aesthetically pleasing way-find system guides them to many local venues. City ordinances incentivize recycling, green building and encourage investment in the arts and beautification projects. Our eco-friendly community protects and enhances the environment and we use our resources wisely.

Ardmore has been recognized statewide and nationally for its efforts in community beautification. The efforts of its citizens reinforce the commitment to the betterment of Ardmore. Ardmore promotes, through the arts, one of our most valuable resources – area artists who enhance our city and contribute to our economic vitality.

### RECYCLING

Goal: To establish a recycling program to eventually include curbside collection and a plan to foster green education and economic development, and encourage LEED certification of facilities.

### Objectives and Plans of Action:

- <u>Create a community wide recycling program by the year 2012.</u> This would be achieved by the implementation of awareness/education programs utilizing science programs in area schools, events such as Earth Day and the creation of a Recycling Forum open to the general public and held at least twice a year.
- Addition of new drop sites throughout the city. A key component to accomplish this will be the identification of locations and partners incorporating all quadrants. The timeline to identify locations will be 2012.
- Secure a resource to buy 25% of the recycled materials by 2012 and 50% by 2014. The process to accomplish this objective will begin with assistance from the Department of Environmental Quality. In addition, we will work with the Oklahoma Sustainability Network to locate markets for the recyclables. The resources of other partners such as the Ardmore Beautification Counsel, Keep Oklahoma Beautiful and Wal-Mart could be utilized to make the sale of materials economically feasible.

#### BEAUTIFICATION

Goal: The creation of a comprehensive plan for the enhanced appearance of the community including green development, sidewalks/trails, creation of beautification ordinances, new entrance signage and continuation of the Art in Public Places Program.

- Create an urban greenway policy by 2010. This would be accomplished by evaluating current codes
  and identifying the gaps. A policy should be formulated and presented to the City Commission for
  approval and implementation.
- <u>Increase sidewalks and trails by 20% annually and create bike friendly roadways.</u> Determine the areas that need sidewalks and trails and establish a plan for implementation. Funding for this project needs to be obtained from outside sources, such as federal funds dedicated to trails.
- The establishment of bike routes/lanes. The location of these routes should be determined by city planners and biking enthusiasts; in conjunction with the actions identified above. Funding sources will be identified and secured by 2013.
- Continuation of The Art In Public Places Program with art unveiled seasonally. Volunteers utilizing resources such as the Chamber of Commerce Foundation, the Charles B. Goddard Center, the Brass Ring and other art organizations will form an Ardmore Coalition for the Arts (end of 2009). To assist businesses/organizations that wish to participate or house a work of art and facilitate the location of the art/artist for the project. Funds for the program will be provided by participants and through the utilization of outside funding sources such as Oklahoma Arts Council and private benefactors.

### Community Relations

VISION: Ardmore is an inclusive community that values diversity and supports unity through sharing of information and ideas. Our citizens respect the opinions of others and work cooperatively to make Ardmore a better place to live, work and play.

Ardmore's diversity creates both opportunities and challenges. While some citizens embrace our diversity, others feel that they lack influence and impact on the decisions made in the community. The research conducted by the Samuel Roberts Noble Foundation recruits many nationalities to Ardmore and enriches our community The creation of forums for community dialogue will decrease the polarization that can affect our community and inhibit progress. Recognizing the role that religion/faith plays in the respect and acceptance of all individuals, ministers and church leaders need to take an active role in the creating an atmosphere of respect within the community.

Goal: The establishment of committees, both city and area wide to conduct an in-depth analysis of opportunities for improvement including a body of religious leaders to meet and address the issues.

- Revive the Ardmore International Council. This organization will allow the opportunity to socialize with individuals from a variety of international backgrounds as well as provide a forum to educate others on their traditions. The target date for completion is the beginning of 2010.
- Engagement of leaders from all cultural and ethnic groups to participate in a dialogue. Identify leaders from various cultures and ethnic backgrounds, to participate in forum, coordinated by volunteers from the Ardmore 2020 Visioning Project, to be held in the fall of 2009.
- Establish a ministerial alliance. All area ministers will be invited to participate in a summer 2009 discussion of the opportunities created by coordinated efforts.

### Health Care - Facilities/Programs

VISION: Ardmore is focused on healthy living and providing premier health care. Ardmore has facilities and programs for physical and mental health that are the envy of other communities. Customers and providers from a broad area come to Ardmore for services.

The community of Ardmore, with the addition of the new patient tower at Mercy Memorial Health Center has positioned itself as the regional health center in South Central Oklahoma covering an area that services over 128,000 individuals. The new facility provides expanded capacity for hospital patients in a state of the art facility. Challenges with health care facilities center on the needs of cancer patients, mental health, and urgent care. The aging baby-boomers and changes in the availability of affordable health insurance create a need for innovative programs to encourage healthy lifestyles from birth throughout life.

Goal: To provide all inclusive affordable state of the art medical facilities to include delivery of programs and services that will identify, prevent and treat the leading causes of diseases and death in Southern Oklahoma. The program and services will be comprehensive and address mental health issues, healthy lifestyles and chronic disease.

#### **FACILITIES**

### **Objectives and Action Plans:**

- Construct a new, state of the art Cancer Treatment Center. A new facility will be required to meet the expanding needs of Southern Oklahoma and replace aging equipment. The feasibility study currently underway needs to be completed and approved by the Mercy Health System and appropriate approvals by regulatory agencies obtained. Funding will be secured through a variety of public and private sources and completion is slated for 2014.
- Improve access and expand mental health services.
  - A. Renovation of the current facilities is needed in order to allow additional interaction with local health providers and integrate treatment with local physicians and the hospital. Assessment of the potential should be completed by a task force in the spring of 2010.
  - **B**. The addition of a telemedicine infrastructure that would allow the expansion of the mental health services to outlying rural areas. A partner to provide the medical services will need to be identified and secured (such as the OSU School of Osteopathic Medicine). In addition, space to facilitate this function will be necessary. Initial assessment of the feasibility of this program should be complete by the summer of 2010.
  - **C.** The construction of a crisis intervention unit for both adults and children capable of providing specific mental illness care can be accomplished through the creation of a partnership with the hospital to allocate space. Representatives from mental health care, general health care and the community will identify location, space and determine the cost of operations. Funding will be secured from a combination of public and private sources.
- Establish a facility for minor/urgent care treatment services. Local medical, industry and community leaders will determine the needed scope of services. The facility can be built and operated through a partnership of parties comprised of area industry, the medical community and available government funding sources.

### continued.... Health Care

#### **PROGRAMS**

- Development of wellness programs to address needs of the community such as nutrition, mental health, healthy lifestyles and chronic diseases. Accomplish through the following action and be available spring of 2010:
  - A. Create public service announcements to be distributed to area media providing pertinent health information.
  - **B**. Develop effective presentations on easy nutrition, wellness, healthy lifestyle changes for seminars to organizations, civic groups, schools and the general public. Presentations will be proceeded by a comprehensive marketing campaign.
  - **C.** Develop effective presentations on cancer, chronic disease and cardiac prevention principals to present to groups identified above. Materials for distribution will also be made available with this program.
- Implement healthy menus in schools. Utilize existing resources to educate parents and school officials on the benefits of good nutrition and healthy lifestyles. Coordinate with PTO's to influence implementation of these changes. Timeline for adoption by area schools is the fall of 2009 with implementation in the school year 2010.

### **ARDMORE 2020 STEERING COMMITTEE**

Jessica Pfau Rick Baggett

Co-Chairman Co-Chairman

Andre' Moore
Cindy Mannas
Fred Wright
Glenn Gee
Jay Johnson
Kim Benedict
Linda Humphrey
Nathan Verner
Willie Tiller, Jr.
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### **ARDMORE 2020 CONTRIBUTORS**

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Oklahoma Natural Gas
Ardmore Chamber of Commerce
Mazzio's Italian Eatery
Rhonda's Catering
Starbucks Coffee
Wint's Catering
Jack Riley
Scott Chapman
Allen Bynum
Bob Bates

### **ARDMORE 2020 PARTICIPANTS**

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