

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background



The Roeland Park Comprehensive Plan is the City's official plan for the future. The Plan serves as the community's guideline for future development, changes to the City's zoning and subdivision regulations, and compliance with the Code of Kansas Statute No. 12-747 section b.

This comprehensive plan plays an additional role beyond compliance with state statute. It embodies the community's vision for the future of Roeland Park with specific goals, direction for current development opportunities and a community implementation plan.

The plan is based on the following key principles:

- Maintain stability of Roeland Park's single-family residential base.
- Accommodate new types of housing to attract new and maintain current residents.
- Balance the City's opportunity to control the type and quality of development possible with newly created market demand for city-owned property.
- Maximize the City's benefit from the Mission Gateway project.
- Enhance the image and character of Roeland Park.

1.2 History of Roeland Park

On July 2, 2011, Roeland Park celebrated its 60th anniversary as an incorporated city. Before Roeland Park was incorporated, archaeologists explored our region and determined that a group, known as the Hopewellian people, lived in the Kansas City area from 122 BC to AD 800. Around AD 1000 these people gave way to a culture based on hunting, fishing and rudimentary agriculture. The first people to be identified living in the general area that is now Roeland Park, were the Kansa Indians. The Kaw (Kansa) was one of five Dhegiha tribes that migrated west from the Ohio Valley. The Kaw were noted in the area in 1724. The Kansa Indians are believed to be members of a group of Siouan Indians that splintered off a main group and initially settled near the mouth of the Kaw River in Wyandotte County, probably before AD 1800. The tribe also established villages in other locations north of Leavenworth and west of Lawrence. Continued pressures on this group resulted in its moving westward until eventually it, along with other tribes, were relocated to Indian Territory.

In 1829 the United States government granted the Shawnee Indians a reservation that extended along the Kaw River from what is now the Kansas-Missouri state line, westward into Douglas County. The Shawnee Indians initially lived in bark huts or wigwams (Not the tepees of the Plains Indians). They arrived in Kansas in two groups. One group of about 100 arrived in 1829 and the balance of about 900 arrived in 1832. In 1830 the Rev Thomas Johnson attempted to establish a mission for the Shawnee Indians near what is now Turner, Kansas. This proved unsuitable and the mission was relocated and opened in 1839 at its present location. The Shawnees were moved to Indian Territory in 1862, although some individuals stayed on as part of the general population of Johnson County.

An interesting sidelight of "what might have been" is that Joseph Smith and a deputation of Mormons visited Johnson County in 1832. After a careful survey they selected Shawnee Township as the future home of Mormondom. This was not to be. For once, the government had some scruples and refused to break the treaty with the Shawnee. The Mormons then settled near Independence, Missouri.

The first owner of land that is now part of the City of Roeland Park was Sim-e-to, also known as John Denny. He received 160 acres of land on November 7, 1858. This tract was located in the area between what is now 51st Street to 55th Street and Nall Avenue to about Sherwood. The land was preempted and reissued to Mary Pinner, a widow of the War of 1812 soldier. She assigned the land to Alexander Johnson, the son of Rev. Thomas Johnson. Just why the land was taken from Sim-e-to is not known. One report suggests this may have happened because John Denny was part of a gang of horse thieves. He is reported to have been hanged for stealing horses. He is buried in an unmarked grave in an unmarked cemetery located at what is now 55th and Queal Streets in western Merriam, Kansas.



On April 16, 1865 the United States issued a land patent to the Reverend Thomas Johnson for about 1,800 acres of land. Generally this land consisted of all or parts of Sections 3 and 4, and the North half of Sections 9 and 10, Township 12 South, Range 25 East in Johnson County, Kansas. Reverend Johnson was murdered before the patent was completed and title to the land was vested in his widow and children, each of whom received a portion of the land or other assets. The area that is now the City of Roeland Park is all located on land granted to Reverend Johnson, or acquired from Mrs. Pinner.

Between 1865 and 1875 various sales and transfers of the property were made. Property owners in 1875 were: Alexander S. Johnson, Andrew M. Johnson and Edna Johnson who were children of Rev. Thomas Johnson; F. A. Waterman, whose wife was the former Laura Johnson, daughter of Thomas Johnson; John B. Wornall whose wife was Eliza S. Johnson; Moses Greno, who owned the Indian Mission site; and J. Chandler, G. W. Fincke, H. Hall, and F. T. Scruggs.

By 1875 Johnson County had several incorporated towns including Shawnee Town, located about five miles west of the Shawnee Indian Mission; Campbellton, located in what is now Merriam, and Glenwood, located four miles southwest of the Mission. Other Johnson County towns included Olathe, Eudora and others. However, only a school, the Shawnee Indian Mission, and farmsteads were in the area in which the City of Roeland Park is now located.

Beginning in 1882, John Roe began to assemble his farm. The original farm was located in the area that is now 55th Street to 59th Street, Nall to Roe. In 1884 and 1893 John Roe expanded his holding northward to 51st Street and subsequently to the Johnson/Wyandotte county line. He also acquired land to the east between Neosho and Mission Road and 55th to what is now Elledge Drive.

In 1905, John Roe granted an easement to William Strang to construct a rail line for the Missouri-Kansas Railroad across the northern parts of his farm. The Missouri-Kansas Railroad, more commonly referred to as the Strang Line, ran from near Westport to Olathe. The line entered the City of Roeland Park area near 47th and Canterbury Streets, traveled southwesterly to near the site of the present City Hall, then across Roe Avenue where it went westerly on the north side of 51st Street.

1.3 Planning Process

The Planning Commission during 2011-2012 spent several months reviewing the 2002/2007 Comprehensive Plan to update statistical information, including the goals and objectives set forth in that plan and to identify, based on updated data about Roeland Park, and the current and future key issues facing the community.

- The Planning Commission provided a recommendation by resolution to the governing body after a public hearing process had been completed. The first Comprehensive Plan was created May 7, 1991
- In May, 2002 the City updated the Comprehensive Plan. Consideration was given to future land use and community development issues. The Plan was created by the citizens, City staff, shareholders and elected officials in Roeland Park and is intended to provide guidance on future community development issues. The Plan provided a future vision of the community, a set of common goals for which to strive and a pathway of steps to attain these goals.
- In 2007, the City held an extensive and lively community participation process, guided by a Community Steering Committee, to update the 2002 plan. The Steering Committee held three public town hall meetings and eight Committee meetings. Citizens discussed development pressures, neighborhood concerns, as well as the character and image of Roeland Park, City services and the role Roeland Park should play in the future of the metropolitan area.
- As a function of the Planning Commission, the commissioners are to review and provide updates and recommendations to the Plan. Their focus is on all existing and proposed developments within the City. Public Hearings will be held in April 2012 for public comments.

1.4 Key Issues

One of the primary reasons for replacing the 2002/2007 Comprehensive Plan is the recent development activity in the neighboring City of Mission, Kansas and the subsequent benefit and impact on Roeland Park residents. This development activity springs from a combination of market forces and the foresight of northeast Johnson County cities to position themselves to not only take advantage of the opportunity presented, but to determine **what** they want and **how** to proceed in order to best serve their citizens.

Many of the action steps outlined in the plan have been completed or are ongoing, especially those related to municipal services and the recent development of the Bella Roe retail area. The city received high marks from citizens at public meetings held in June, 2006.

The Plan focuses on the city-owned sites that provide new development opportunities that the city can actually control through property ownership, land use and zoning, thereby leveraging a chance to change the character of Roeland Park.

The key issues are as follows:

- Support the redevelopment plans currently underway for the 47th and Mission Road Neighborhood Center. Refer to Section 3 (New & Neighboring Developments).
- Amend as necessary and adopt the recommendation of the East Gateway Redevelopment Plan. Refer to Section 3 (New & Neighboring Developments), for the description of this joint planning effort.
- Promote quality development at the two cloverleaf sites at Roe Boulevard and Johnson Drive.
- Utilize the development opportunity at Roe Boulevard and Johnson Drive as a formal southern gateway to the City and create a northern gateway to the City.

- Minimize the physical barriers for vehicles and pedestrians crossing Roe Boulevard.
- Promote somewhat higher densities of owner occupied residential redevelopment that adhere to the plan and direction set forth in this Comprehensive Plan. Examples of higher densities include townhouses and senior citizen facilities.
- Redevelop the old City Pool site and Roe Lane corridor to be a more viable establishment within the Town Village Center.
- Implement the recommendations of the Park Master Plan on City park properties.
- Encourage upkeep and worth of the Bella Roe Plaza development at Town Center.
- Support quality development in the City.
- Encourage development that maximizes revenue for the City.
- Create and preserve revenue for the City in all development.



R Park- 5535 Juniper