



# CITY OF SOUTH HUTCHINSON

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# STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared by  
Center for Urban Studies  
Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs  
Wichita State University  
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WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

FAIRMOUNT COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

*Hugo Wall School of Urban  
and Public Affairs*

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**City of South Hutchinson Strategic Plan**  
**July 5, 2011**

In consultation with the South Hutchinson community and City staff, the Center for Urban Studies at Wichita State University presents this strategic plan draft to the City Council for consideration. The plan provides goals and objectives decided through community participation that offer guidance for public investment and service delivery. It is designed to help position City government to meet the community's future needs.

**BACKGROUND**

In March, 2011, the City of South Hutchison contracted with the WSU Center for Urban Studies to develop a community-wide strategic plan. The project was partially underwritten with a Community Capacity Building (CCB) grant from the Kansas Department of Commerce.

South Hutchinson with a population of 2,540 and a large industrial base is the second largest community in Reno County, Kansas. Growth in Reno County due to the emerging wind energy manufacturing industrial base presents South Hutchinson with a unique opportunity.

Expansions in regional and local industry, heavy highway traffic and residential development have created the need for the City of South Hutchinson to engage in strategic planning. With projected growth comes the need to adequately plan to best attract and manage the effects of growth.

Until now, South Hutchinson has muddled through the growth process, with no defined plan or community identity. Members of the community describe local growth as stagnant and below potential. The City Council has recognized the need for continued economic development coupled with a lack of planning. Economic realities make it more difficult to balance the need for growth and the cost of services. Strategic planning will allow the City Council to be proactive rather than reactive to capitalize on the economic momentum, grow the community and increase the quality of life for its residents.

Internally, the City has attempted to make changes to address economic development needs. In 2005, a City employee was promoted to work both as a code enforcement and economic

development officer. In 2010, the City created a city administrator position to handle daily operations and work on economic development needs. The City’s planning commission also has made several recommendations to improve the quality of life for residents but has lacked the capacity to formulate a systematic and comprehensive plan for the community.

**ECONOMIC ANALYSIS**

South Hutchinson has a strong economic base that is uncommon for communities of its size in Kansas. Large manufacturing facilities are located in South Hutchinson anchored by Morton Salt International, Tyson Food Processing, Collins Bus Company, American Packaging. South Hutchinson is also home to large employers Stutzman’s Refuse and Mennonite Friendship Manor. Several smaller specialized manufacturing and service businesses are located in South Hutchinson, many locally owned. In addition, there are many government offices located in South Hutchinson including the state of Kansas regional Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS), USDA Farm Service office, and Reno County Public Works.

The top 10 employers for the City of South Hutchinson are detailed in the chart below. Of the top employers, four companies provide primary manufacturing jobs that export tremendous value and provide economic support to many for secondary jobs in the surrounding area. According to 2011 study performed by the Buxton Company, the daytime population for the area includes approximately 2,294 jobs based in South Hutchinson. Traffic counts provided by the Kansas Department of Transportation indicate that 10,695 vehicles travel through the K-96 and US-50 interchange on the south end of the city daily.

<b>Employer</b>	<b>Average Daily Employment</b>
<b>Tyson Foods</b>	520
<b>Collins Bus Company</b>	243
<b>Mennonite Manor</b>	223
<b>Morton Salt</b>	155
<b>Social &amp; Rehabilitation Services</b>	131
<b>American Packaging</b>	45
<b>Stutzman’s Refuse</b>	45
<b>Reno County Public Works</b>	40
<b>McDonald’s</b>	40
<b>City of South Hutchinson</b>	24

Despite a challenging national economy that has posted unemployment rates of more than 10%, the unemployment rate in Reno County was 6% in 2009 and 2010. According to the Kansas Department of Labor, the five-year average for unemployment in Reno County has been 5.14%, peaking in 2009 at 6.7%. City-level data is not available for South Hutchinson, but major employers report employment remaining steady despite the challenging economic climate.

Population growth in South Hutchinson has been flat since 2000. Final 2010 U.S. Census information will be made available at year-end 2011. Based on 2008 estimates, South Hutchinson's population has increased by eight residents from the 2000 Census. South Hutchinson added 4% population from 1990 to 2000. Steady or declining populations have afflicted numerous small towns in Kansas. However, the availability of primary jobs in South Hutchinson is a key indicator of potential population growth for the community. Failure to attract or retain residents is a unique challenge for South Hutchinson compared to other declining population areas with limited employment opportunities.

## **PROCESS**

The Center for Urban Studies at the Hugo Wall School of Urban and Public Affairs, Wichita State University (WSU), worked with the City of South Hutchinson to prepare this strategic plan for the community. The university's Center for Community Support and Research (CCSR) assisted with meeting facilitation services.

### **Listening tour**

The strategic planning development process began in April, 2011 and continued through June, 2011. To identify the appropriate strategic planning issues, the WSU team facilitated a May 19 and May 23 listening tour (10 total small group engagement sessions) with individuals representing the City; USD309 Nickerson-South Hutchinson; business managers/owners; economic development professionals; senior citizens and faith-based, volunteer and other government organizations. The sessions took place May 19 and May 23 at City Hall and Police Department Conference Room. The May 19 portion of the listening tour culminated with an evening meeting open to the public at Mennonite Manor. A total of 131 individuals

participated in the listening tour or individual interviews by the WSU consultant who compiled the comments into written reports used by the steering committee.

### **Steering committee**

A diverse steering committee was appointed by the Mayor and council members with five members appointed by the elected officials and 12 individuals recommended by the city staff. The committee was charged with organizing the public input and focusing it into a working document. The chair of the steering committee was appointed to assist with meeting facilitation and present updates to the City Council. All steering committee meetings were open to the public.

Steering committee members were Lowell Peachey, chair; Tim Ault-Duell; Claude Bell; Mark Borecky; Glenn Epp; Ron Hirst; Jeanette Hoffman; Rhoda Jones; Erwin Leeper; Jerry McGonigle; Steve Miller; Sherye Parks; Joyce Pitman; Linda Richardson; Midge Simmons; Perry Stutzman, and Mia Wilson.

Committee members participated in an orientation meeting on May 5. At a June 2 session, the committee reviewed the listening tour and interview written reports and developed a vision statement and goals. A week later on June 9, the group prioritized its list of goals when each member present voted for his or her top five choices. Vote tallies are published with each goal in the goals section of this report. This process defined Tier 1 or short-term goals for City consideration in the next three to five years followed by Tier 2 or long-term goals for municipal consideration in five to 10 years. The committee then developed specific objectives for each Tier 1 goal. Tier 2 goals are identified in this report and have no formally developed objectives due to the extended planning horizon. Committee members, guided by WSU facilitator, often worked in three-to-five member groups with assigned scribes or note-takers, consistently sharing their comments and topics as a body of the whole.

### **CATALYST MARKETING**

In conjunction with the strategic planning process, the City of South Hutchinson retained Catalyst Creative Services, Hutchinson, to develop a marketing plan. According to the South

Hutchinson City Council, marketing is a critical area of need for the City and this issue fits naturally into the strategic planning process. Catalyst provided representatives at each listening tour engagement session and all steering committee meetings. Observations from the engagement sessions will form the foundation for Catalyst's marketing plan. Catalyst reports that additional focus group sessions may be used to complete the marketing plan.

### **TIMETABLE**

Steering Committee Chair Lowell Peachey and WSU Consultant Gayle Martin presented an update on the first draft of the strategic plan to the City Council on June 20. Steering committee members also received a draft of the plan with an invitation to provide feedback by June 28. The final draft of the plan was presented to the City Council on July 5 for approval to submit the plan to the Kansas Department of Commerce (KDOC) for review and recommendations. Final City Council action on the plan will be scheduled when City staff receives KDOC's feedback.

### **OBSERVATIONS**

Several themes emerged during the listening tour and interview sessions including the excitement surrounding the new City Administrator, the need to improve Main Street's curb appeal and the urgency to recruit new industry and expand existing industry. Consensus surfaced that the community needs to do a better job developing young leaders and business owners and capitalize on opportunities to develop partnerships with schools, city government and the business community.

Community strengths expressed in nearly all of the listening tour sessions included highway access, existing industries, ease of access to larger cities, safety and low crime rate, churches, public schools, and available land and water for industrial purposes. Consistent challenges were business development and expansion, lack of retail specifically restaurants and grocery stores, curb appeal and property conditions. Listening tour participants and individual interviewees expressed a community vision encompassing economic growth through industrial expansion, retention of friendly, small-town atmosphere, new retail establishments, improved housing, additional city parks and beautification efforts.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The City of South Hutchinson is creating its preferred future to meet the needs of its residents through active community involvement. The City is home to dynamic and robust industrial, business, and residential areas that provide jobs and livable spaces to the region. With ample gateways to major highways and rail service, South Hutchinson attracts and expands business and recreational opportunities. Residents are proud of the small town atmosphere, exceptional quality of life, heritage, churches and schools.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The steering committee developed a list of eight goals and each member present at the June 9 meeting voted for his or her top five choices in order to prioritize. This allowed for Tier 1 or short-term goals for consideration in the next three to five years followed by Tier 2 or long-term goals for consideration in five to 10 years. The committee then developed objectives for each Tier 1 goal. Some Tier 1 objectives are already in progress.

### **Tier 1 Goals**

**Goal 1a: Increase business opportunities, enhance economic development and sustain growth in existing businesses /Maintain and enhance the quality of existing structures (9 steering committee votes)**

#### **Key objectives:**

- Create a task force comprised of a cross-section of South Hutchinson business owners (large and small), Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce representatives and South Hutchinson city officials to develop specific objectives and strategies utilizing current economic development data, trends and information from this strategic planning process.
- Explore financial incentives for new, creative, young entrepreneurs and foster better relationships with existing organizations and programs for entrepreneurs.
- Develop and maintain a central point of information related to starting a business in South Hutchinson including incentives and available land and buildings.

**Lead organization:** City and the Quest Center for Entrepreneurs in partnership with the Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce, local businesses and other economic development organizations.

**Target date for initiation:**

**Goal 1b: Increase retail growth to promote jobs and increase population (9 votes)**

**Key objectives:**

- Refer to short-term economic development task force described in Goal 1a.
- Explore incentives for retail development.
- Utilize Buxton study to directly recruit retailers and developers.
- Develop a core retail growth zone and provide infrastructure for new/expanded development.

**Lead organization:** City

**Target date for initiation:**

**Goal 2: Develop and implement a formal plan to improve the appearance of Main Street and major gateways (8 votes)**

**Key objectives related to potential City projects:**

- Develop minimum landscaping requirements for businesses along Main Street.
- Research and form committee to apply for grants for trees.
- Identify a “core area” for South Hutchinson.
- Utilize City resources to purchase Main Street properties when they become available.
- Increase number of crosswalks along Main Street.
- Study existing bike path and analyze danger of location adjacent to major thoroughfare with heavy truck traffic.
- Seek financial incentives to promote beautification (curb appeal) of existing businesses.

**Lead organization:** City

**Target date for initiation:**

**Key objectives related to community wide beautification:**

- Recruit a group of volunteers to beautify specific areas.
- Host annual community Clean Up Day.
- Create a program to increase planting of vegetation—utilize children and schools.
- Involve upper elementary students (5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> graders) in community beautification projects.

**Lead organization:** South Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce with assistance from USD 309 Nickerson-South Hutchinson, churches, Market South Hutchinson

**Target date for initiation:**

**GOAL 3: Create and promote a unique identity for South Hutchinson (8 votes)**

**Key objectives:**

- Assign this issue to the City's current marketing consulting firm with a timeline for completion.
- Create a logo to identify the industrial base of South Hutchinson; a community "icon" such as Manhattan's "Little Apple".
- Promote South Hutchinson as "Jobs Capitol of Kansas".

**Lead organization:** City, current marketing firm, Market South Hutchinson

**Target date for initiation:**

**Additional key objective:**

- Add amenities (such as picnic tables) at river access point.

**Lead organization:** City

**Target date for initiation:**

**Goal 4: Identify and develop the assets unique to South Hutchinson that can be used to make South Hutchinson a destination (8 votes)**

**Key objectives:**

- Assign this issue to the City's current marketing consulting firm with a timeline for completion.
- Create a Facebook page to market South Hutchinson as a destination (can be used to market to potential businesses and promote events and school activities).

**Lead organization:** City, current marketing firm, Market South Hutchinson

**Target date for initiation:**

*CURRENT ASSETS AS DEFINED BY STEERING COMMITTEE*

- *South Hutchinson Elementary School*
- *Variety of churches*
- *Friendly people*
- *Industries—Collins Industries, Morton Salt, Tyson Foods, Stutzman Refuse Disposal (state of the art recycling plant), American Packaging Corporation*
- *Tremendous labor market*
- *Best of both urban and rural worlds*
- *Great major highways—highways 17, 96, 50, 61*
- *ATV and dirt bike trails in river bed*

*POTENTIAL ASSETS AS DEFINED BY STEERING COMMITTEE*

- *A center for vocational training (i.e., Collins Industries, one of the largest bus manufacturers and a source of employment)*
- *A destination restaurant—unique like the hamburger restaurant in Castle Rock, CO, named CRAVE—unique food option unlike anything in nearby Hutchinson*

**GOAL 5: Increase opportunities for young adult involvement in community project, government and leadership roles (8 votes)**

**Key objectives:**

- Develop a “young professionals” group or partner with a similar group in Hutchinson.
- Seek partnerships with Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber’s leadership program; develop a smaller-scale version.
- Develop mentoring programs matching existing business owners with new business owners.

**Lead organization:** South Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce

**Target date for initiation:**

**Additional key objectives:**

- Create opportunities, partnerships, internships for upper middle school, Nickerson High School and Hutchinson Community College students to shadow and participate in activities and operations of representatives of the business community and city government (city council, economic development organizations); target students enrolled in social studies classes.
- Create programs to develop young leaders in government—youth council, young professionals council.

- Create a program to recruit community and business volunteers in the schools
- Expand existing partnerships involving South Hutchinson Elementary School and city fire and police departments.

**Lead organization:** USD 309 Nickerson – South Hutchinson school district with assistance from South Hutchinson Chamber of Commerce, Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber of Commerce and City

**Target date for initiation:**

## **Tier 2 Goals**

Tier 2 represents long-term goals to focus on in five to 10 years. This category represents the priority ranking of the steering committee. Circumstances may allow or require the community to work on these goals prior to 2016. Flexibility is the key to allow City government to respond to situations as they arise.

**LONG-TERM GOAL: Sustain current programs to maintain a livable environment (4 steering committee votes)**

**LONG-TERM GOAL: Establish housing developments to meet the needs of diverse incomes (1 vote)**

**LONG-TERM GOAL: Explore and develop programs to foster community pride activities (0 votes)**

## **SUMMARY**

The strategic planning process in South Hutchinson demonstrated a high level of positive energy in the community. Listening tour participants and individual interviewees shared common themes and desires for the future of their community. Praising the public school system, churches and new city administrator, participants were sincere in expressing their hopes and desire for the community many call home. Maintaining the delicate balance of community growth and expansion with retaining the small-town, friendly atmosphere presents a challenge best managed with guidance outlined in the City's strategic plan.

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**LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

**Business Representatives (2 interviews)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

- Available land with excellent highway access
- Existing industries
- Highways – transportation corridors
- Momentum for growth
- Access to Hutchinson amenities
- More business development along major highways
- People involved in the community are anxious to move forward

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

- Retain existing industries
- Lack of a community identity
- Money
- Leadership
- Loss of a longtime local banking family & support of former grocery store and other businesses

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

**3A. Economic Development**

Working well now	Future	Who
Existing industries	Continue	
	Recruit new industries	
	Consider a niche grocery store similar to Smith’s Market in Hutchinson (year-round vegetables)	
	Retain existing industries	

**3B. Quality of Life**

Working well now	Future	Who
	Poor in relation to City of Hutchinson	

**3C. Community Involvement**

Working well now	Future	Who
	Recruit new leaders	
New young city administrator	Recruit young leaders	

**Business Representatives (cont.)**

3D. Local Government

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Form of government	Continue	City, elected officials
First city administrator	Continue	City, elected officials
	Increase tax base	

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

Figure out what brought Tyson and Collins Industries to the community  
 Expand industry which will bring people in and fuel new housing, amenities  
 Do above along with identifying and creating a community “identity”  
 Answer the question of what do we want to grow into  
 Retain friendly atmosphere  
 Working with the Hutchinson-Reno County Chamber of Commerce to find employers and people to fill jobs  
 More housing development including affordable housing  
 Capitalize on highway access – K-96 corridor  
 Retain good public schools

5A. What is your vision for the community?

A community focus on business and industry  
 Growth along with Hutchinson

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

South Hutchinson recruits new GM plant  
 South Hutchinson attracts another major manufacturing company  
 South Hutchinson....a place of opportunity  
 South Hutchinson expands south along Highway 50

## **LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

### **City Employees (13 attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as foundation for the future?

Highways – location – junction – traffic counts  
Industry base – large employers  
Small town friendliness  
Retirement community  
Wichita commute  
Access to major airport  
Amenities – close  
Number of churches  
Veteran’s Memorial planning  
Recycling center  
Lower taxes than neighbors  
Building incentives  
Central location in state  
Good schools  
Public safety  
Space for growth (land)  
Infrastructure for growth  
Tenured city employee base  
ATV trails

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Road conditions  
More restaurants/fast food  
Grocery store  
Sam’s club  
Park amenities – community center (senior center)  
Entertainment  
Land locked – west – only grow to south  
Development – housing & business  
Expand recreation opportunities – parks and recreation  
Attract highway traffic  
Small city – isolated (land locked on some sides)  
Money  
Lack of core – city center  
Curb appeal  
Lack of medical facilities  
Retain youth activities – increase activities  
Lack of cemetery  
Elementary school only

### City Employees (cont.)

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

#### 3A. Economic Development

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>
Land	
Employees	New employees
	Address competition with Hutchinson for entertainment venues
Housing growth	Continue
	Retail
	Capture employees – non-residents
	Reason to live in South Hutchinson
	Curb appeal
	Identify; niche, image
	Industrial development
	Farmer’s market
Incentives	Continue
Tax abatements	Continue
Tax levy for street improvements & economic development	Continue

#### 3B. Quality of Life

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>
Parks	Improve parks
Youth programming	Recreation facility
	Expand medical facilities
Retirement community	Continue
	Retain youth
Low crime rate	
Safety for leisure activities	
Public safety	
	Public access to river
	Farmer’s market

**City Employees (cont.)**

3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future
	Increase volunteerism for community events such as former Salt Fest – City take the lead
	Examine communitywide current and former events; create sense of community with new events
Police and school	Expand activities for school-aged children including high school
Police department	Continue successful Halloween event
	Increase church activities
	Celebrate other holidays as a community
	Recruit new retail businesses and involve more retail businesses in supporting community activities

3D. Local Government

Working well now	Future	Who
Longtime employees – good		
	Younger elected officials	
	Business owners	
High involvement in elections		
New City administrator		
	City Hall building facelift	
	Joint facility, city hall, community center, recreation Center	

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

- Curb Appeal – community entryways
- Parks & recreation – community building and wellness center
- Housing and residential growth – more entertainment
- Retail business grown – restaurants
- Infrastructure – paved streets
- Community involvement
- Annual community event
- Land acquisition

## City Employees (cont.)

5A. What is your vision for the community?

Expand City limits 3 to 5 miles south – industrial park  
Growth of education – all levels  
Curb appeal – overall community  
Still growing/larger population  
City parks, wellness center, kid's activities (water park)  
Stronger retail – Farmer's market  
(Main Street) developed corridor  
Housing rehabilitation – existing  
"Greener" community – community garden

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

Booming community, growing by leaps and bounds  
Good place to work and raise a family  
Farmer's market sells local goods, expands each year  
Growth – maintain low taxes  
Biggest "Little City" in Kansas

## **LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

### **Community Meeting (41 attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

Good restaurants  
Potential railroad access  
Pharmacy  
Existing large company employers  
Good fire department  
Bank  
Available sites and land for future development (housing, commercial, industrial)  
Financial incentives for growth  
Close to jobs, including Wichita  
Availability of bus service  
Walking path  
Forward looking  
Retail stores  
Churches (2xs)  
Friendly  
Location accessibility  
Strong neighborhood feeling  
Low crime rate  
Good infrastructure  
Good city maintenance  
Retirement center  
(New) low-income housing  
Small town quality schools  
Four major highways  
City park  
Excellent main street  
Safe environment  
Easy access to larger cities  
Entry into Hutchinson  
Good city government

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

No grocery  
Citizens need to support local merchants  
Poor drainage in many areas  
Holding down the mill levy  
Industrial growth  
Too many dirt streets  
Walking path from South Hutch to Valley Pride area

**Community Meeting (cont.)**

- Quality fast food
- Community activities
- Lack of population growth
- Street improvements
- Property clean-up
- No community center
- Better established business district
- Money \$\$
- More retail stores
- Local employment potential
- Identity crisis with Hutch (school contest for bird, flower)
- No good parks for kids
- Code enforcement
- Community building
- No high school
- Lack of parks and recreation for families
- Post office (mini post office)
- Poor well water (bad landscaping)
- No ice cream store
- Mobile home parks
- Good non-fast food restaurants
- EMS service
- Auto parts store
- Medical center/services

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

3A. Economic Development

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>
Railroad access	
Land availability	
Kid friendly	
New housing	
Industrial expansion	
Existing incentives	Continue
	Expand retail
	Street and sidewalk improvement

## Community Meeting (cont.)

### 3B. Quality of Life

Working well now	Future
Friendly	
Good schools	
Air quality/ good environment	
Small town	
Beauty shops	
Low crime rate	
Variety of churches	
	More community parks
	Kids' activities
	Community center
	Youth activities
	Streetscape improvements
	Beautification

### 3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future
Salt Fest – community activities	More volunteers

### 3D. Local Government

Working well now	Future
The form of the local government	
Police department	
Public safety	Fulltime fire department
Good city maintenance	
	Explore new sources of money

## 4. What should South Hutchinson's priorities be over the next three to five years?

#1 – Street and drainage improvements including Valley Pride

#2 – Recruit retail businesses including grocery store, unique restaurants, and ice cream store

#3 – Parks and park improvements (playground equipment, skateboard park)

*The following are not ranked:*

Code enforcement

Maintenance standards for community and industrial

Business incentives

Medical-dental facilities

Housing expansion and rehabilitation (grant \$)

New businesses (jobs, employment)

Business retention (jobs, employment)

Community center

## Community Meeting (cont.)

Main street beautification  
Community activities for all ages  
Reasons to retain citizens

5A. What is your vision for the community?

A community where you can live, work, and play  
Welcoming and friendly  
Progressive  
Safe

5B. What should be headline for the community in 10 years?

Percentage of growth  
Prosperity for all  
Excellent quality of life  
Neighbors know neighbors (and watch out for each other)  
Good place to shop!  
Wonderful place to be  
Mindset – we can always do better  
City song, flower!  
Better identity  
South Hutchinson lands Sam's Club  
South Hutchinson gets cemetery  
Lots of innovative activities  
South Hutchinson opens community center, activity center  
South Hutchinson is "not" Hutchinson

## LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011

### **Economic Development Group Representatives (9 attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

Utility infrastructure = growth  
Location – highways  
Government attitude for upward growth  
Housing activity – momentum  
Community growth  
Good relations with contractor/city staff  
Close proximity to Hutchinson  
Responsiveness of local government  
Strong business base

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Small tax base  
Aging buildings and housing  
Aging population  
Dependency on non-residents for workforce and revenues  
Lack of retail  
Lack of services/medical/dental  
South Hutchinson Chamber  
Unpaved streets  
Curb appeal – first impression, gateways  
Food service options  
Government financing capacity  
Forward looking – future development growth areas  
Owner-occupied housing

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

## Economic Development Group Representatives (cont.)

### 3A. Economic Development

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Housing momentum	Continue	City, developers, federal programs, employers
Partnership with Hutchinson/Reno county Chamber	Continue	Local governments
Small business growth starting	Continue	City government, Quest Center
Attracting new businesses	Accelerate	City government
Retention/expansion/consolidation of existing businesses	Continue	City government
	Formal incentives for non-competing businesses	City government
Neighborhood Revitalization Program	Continue	City government
	Strong S Hutchinson Chamber	Small businesses
	Communication among economic groups	Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber
	Community vision (formal)	City, county, Chamber
	Economic analysis of housing opportunities, including rental (both Hutchinson & South Hutchinson)	School board, county, City & Chamber

### 3B. Quality of Life

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Local schools		
	More retail/food/shopping	Chamber, City, county
Walking trails	More parks/green space	Friends of Trail, City
	Community Center	City & business partnerships
	Walking Trail	City master plan
	Destinations for trails	Business community
	Develop existing park & create neighborhood parks	City
	Activities for youth and adults	City, churches, Neighborhood Associations, Nonprofits, community foundation, YMCA possible partner
	Encourage existing & new neighborhood activities	City, churches
	Community Web page/ promote activities	

**Economic Development Group Representatives (cont.)**

3C. Community Involvement

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
	Recruit younger residents to become involved and lead	Existing residents, older leaders
Create an atmosphere conducive to change	Continue	Reno County leadership programs for youth & adults
	Develop leaders	Existing Young Professionals organization and other Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber groups
	Encourage sense of "community"	

3D. Local Government

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Form of government	Continue	City, elected officials
First city administrator	Continue	City, elected officials
	Younger leadership influence	City, elected officials
Technology	Continue improvement	City
	Fresh ideas for local planning board to get out of our "comfort zone"	City, elected officials

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

- Curb appeal – first impression – partner with City of Hutchinson
- Housing – momentum – create a model
- Market existing industrial sites
- Upgrade park amenities
- Recruit dental clinic

5A. What is your vision for the community?

- Prairie Ridge and Valley Pride – fully developed
- Housing that attracts young residents
- Maintain and strengthen relationships with existing businesses in South Hutchinson

**Economic Development Group Representatives (cont.)**

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

Success

Pull factor 1.3 (retail)

Hutchinson/South Hutchinson/Reno County join together to eliminate duplication and reduce size of government by 30%

South Hutchinson most livable community in the region

**LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

**Faith-Based Representatives (2 attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

- Access to highway system
- Elementary school
- Trails—usage is high
- Location to Hutchinson
- Small town feel
- Good pace of life—laid back
- Good place to raise children
- Secure
- Cooperation among churches

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

- Lack of visibility among visitors—Yoder Road seen as main road to Hutchinson
- Lack of grocery store
- Lack of restaurants
- Attachment to Nickerson schools—no hometown middle school / high school
- Distance from middle school and high school
- Aging population
- Name confusion—“Southern part of Hutchinson” vs. “South Hutch”
- Churches are geographically removed a significant distance from north side of Hutchinson

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

**3A. Economic Development**

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
	Desire to see area around highway interchange developed	City, County

**3B. Quality of Life**

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Small town feel		
Good pace of life		
Good place to raise children		
Trails		
Existing sports complex	Make it a regional draw	Owners, City, Participants
	Need for a better place for people to gather	Families, Churches, Schools, Manor

**Faith-Based Representatives (cont.)**

3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future	Who
Outreach from churches		
	Community garden	
	Revival of Salt Fest	Volunteers, City, Businesses
	Area garage sale	Business leaders, residents

3D. Local Government

Working well now	Future	Who
Accessible leaders		
City charges are grouped together on one bill		
Police—presence is positive	Keep holding special events	Police

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

Grocery store  
Place for people to gather

5A. What is your vision for the community?

Cooperation among *all* community partners—less adversarial relationship when decisions are hard  
Continue to have a sense of community among all residents—this is more important than number of grocery stores, restaurants or special events  
Do not change small town feel

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

A place where you matter—where you’re known

## **LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

### **Government Organizations (8 government attendees, 1 business representative)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

City administration  
Quality of life  
Large employers  
Transportation—access to major highways  
Lower gas prices  
Sense of independence  
Police department  
Our Lady of Guadalupe baseball complex  
Churches—diversity of denominations  
Child care options including after school programs  
Progressive thinking  
Sidewalks/trails—destinations  
People feel connected  
Informative Web site  
Public safety  
Retail—ALCO store  
Diverse population—age, economic status

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Partially landlocked  
Drainage  
Limited thinking in cooperation  
Some aging utilities  
Water quality—salt  
High maintenance costs of sewer plant  
Non-paved streets  
Lack of housing  
Lack of lodging

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

## Government Organizations (cont.)

### 3A. Economic Development

Working well now	Future	Who
Large employers	Need for retention and expansion Need to recruit employee commuters to live in South Hutchinson	City council, economic development team, Hutchinson/Reno Co. Chamber, county government, KDOT, K-96 Corridor Association
Neighborhood Revitalization Program		
Incentives		
Quest Center		
Rail access		
Formal incentive plans		
	Increased retail and lodging	
	More rental properties	

### 3B. Quality of Life

Working well now	Future	Who
Our Lady of Guadalupe complex		Church
Hike/bike paths	Expand	City, Kansas Parks and Wildlife Department, KDOT, County, private donors
Schools	Continue	
Daycare	Continue and expand	Health Department, Child Care Links, Hutchinson Community College
Sense of community	Retain	
"Family" centered activities	Need to promote	Chamber, Church
Park access	One that is accessible to both sides of main roadway	City hall, Hutchinson/Reno County Health Coalition
ATV access to river		
Public transportation	Continue	County

**Government Organizations (cont.)**

3C. Community Involvement

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Churches	Continue to support	Churches
	PRIDE (KSU Extension)	Anyone
Market South Hutchinson		Market South Hutchinson
	Neighborhood associations	Residents—must be self-driven
	Neighborhood events (garage sales, block parties)	Residents

3D. Local Government

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Current structure adequate	Retain	
	Recruit young leaders—community leadership succession needs	
	More planning (strategic) --Identify trends --Explore other governments --Training for elected officials --Explore consolidation options	

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

Inventory current assets and use to market internally and externally  
Routes to Hutchinson through South Hutchinson  
Beautify entry corridors

5A. What is your vision for the community?

To grow by capitalizing on opportunities (niches)

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

Graduates return to support small business and home growth  
South Hutchinson is nation’s best small city  
Two sister cities divided by a river work together to be named Best Small Cities under 50,000  
South Hutchinson: We’re kind of a big deal

**LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

**K-96 Corridor Development Association Executive Director**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

Following are strengths the K-96 Corridor Development Association developed in a community meeting during the development of the Targeted Industries and Marketing Analysis Study completed in March, 2010.

- Separate and unique identity from Hutchinson
- Low crime rate
- Rural setting near larger community
- Strong sense of community
- Good location
- Transportation access (K-96/US 50 Interchange)
- Existing rail site
- Strong rail service (BNSF, Union Pacific and WATCO)
- Existing industrial base
- Quality of life (strong schools, churches)

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Development of a strategic plan for the future that provides management for growth in residential, business and commercial. The plan being developed is of little value without a dedicated implementation plan with resources, both financial and personal, to make it happen.

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing that future?

**3A. Economic Development**

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
Dedicated funding source for economic development	Continue	
Housing development	Continue	
	Establish group of local private businesses to assist with economic development	
	Fulltime person dedicated to economic development	
	Identify possible land for industrial development; consider lease with option to buy arrangements	
	Web site upgrade to market community	

**K-96 Corridor Development Association Executive Director (cont.)**

South Hutchinson has established a dedicated funding source meager as it is, for economic development. They have done an excellent job of creating housing development within the community. They have established incentives for residential housing. For the future, South Hutchinson needs to establish a group of local private businesses to assist with economic development. At one time in the recent past, they established an Economic Advisory Council but it was disbanded after a short period of time. James Dull has done an excellent job but cannot do code enforcement and economic development both. South Hutchinson’s location provides an excellent site for expansion in both retail and commercial. They have planned for this with their access roads adjacent to U. S. 50 but the development of this area and other areas requires a full time dedicated person---Hutchinson/Reno County Chamber can be a partner in many projects but cannot promote South Hutchinson to the extent that is required.

South Hutchinson also needs to upgrade its Web site to provide for marketing the community.

**3B. Quality of Life**

No specific comments in this area. South Hutchinson education is provided through USD 308, Nickerson and this arrangement has its disadvantages for those in grades 9 through 12.

**3C. Community Involvement**

Working well now	Future	Who
	Develop specific roles for South Hutchison Chamber and for South Hutchinson marketing group outlining specific responsibilities for community & private sector involvement for economic development.	City governing body is not and should not be the group to do day-to-day management of economic development. City councils provide structure and a positive environment for businesses to develop and succeed but should not be the managing body for economic development.

Community and private sector involvement must be organized in a more structured manner. At the present time, the South Hutchinson Chamber has been established but has not been given any specific role by the governing body for assisting with development. As I understand, South Hutchinson also has another group dedicated to marketing. With the development of a strategic plan, there should be specific responsibilities for community and private sector involvement for economic development. The governing body is not and should not be the group to do day-to-day management of economic development. City councils provide structure and a positive environment for businesses to be developed and succeed. The council should not be the managing body for economic development.

## **K-96 Corridor Development Association Executive Director (cont.)**

3D. Local Government (see 3C Community Involvement)

4. What should South Hutchinson's priorities be over the next three to five years?

Adopt an economic development strategic plan to address the recruitment of new businesses, retention and expansion of existing businesses.

Create a dedicated private sector group to assist the city in accomplishing its objectives and the resources, both financial and personal to make it happen.

5A. What is your vision for the community?

To provide plans and programs which promote the growth and wealth of the local economy by retaining existing businesses, attracting new businesses, providing necessary community service facilities and promoting the community as the place you want to live, work, raise a family and have a business.

10-Year Vision:

(a) Businesses along U. S. 50 and south on K-96 that provides local residents and travelers a variety of opportunities for stopping in South Hutchinson

(b) An industrial park that is located on the existing rail line and adjacent to U. S. 50.K-96 intersection.

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

South Hutchinson attracts another new company with 400 employees in its industrial park

## **LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

### **Senior Citizens (42 attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

Close to major highways  
Open acreage for expansion  
Great businesses  
Pharmacies  
ALCO store  
Lots of churches  
Good school district  
Great fire and police departments  
Easy access to Wichita  
Great water supply  
Police involved in community  
Low crime rate  
Good restaurants  
Senior facilities  
Bank and credit union

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Need a grocery store  
Need a post office or postal substation  
Curb appeal  
Lack of sidewalks  
Expansion of industry  
Need medical clinic  
Need to reduce speed limit in senior areas  
Parks and recreation  
More entertainment and restaurants  
More retail  
RV park  
Bring back Salt Fest /parade  
More organizations  
VFW – Andale  
Community center

**Senior Citizens (cont.)**

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

3A. Economic Development

Working well now	Future	Who
Government officials & officers	Increase communication between the people & government officials; more open forums	Government officials and officers, citizens, media
	Business expansion	
	Partner with other cities/counties	

3B. Quality of Life

Working well now	Future	Who
	Sidewalks	City
	Medical clinic	
	Grocery store	
	Parks and recreation	

3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future	Who
	Expansion	
	Curb appeal – cleanup efforts	City - Community
	Community pride	
	Image	
	Name recognition	

3D. Local Government (not covered)

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

Curb appeal  
Sidewalks  
Grocery store

5A. What is your vision for the community?

A place where you love to live  
Place of opportunity  
A thriving community

**Senior Citizens (cont.)**

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

Home of the Blanchard Salt Mine

Dillon's Grocery builds store in South Hutchinson

South Hutchinson – A City of Progress

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTION: Circulate questions in advance of the meeting.

**LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

**School Superintendent - USD 309 Nickerson-South Hutchinson**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

- Public schools with high achievement rates
- School building administration and teacher leadership
- Community pride in school; community commitment to keep strong schools
- Strong English as Second Language program attracting out-of-district participants
- South Hutchinson proximity to larger population areas
- Committed residents, community pride
- Development momentum including housing as a result of industrial base
- The beginning of a community vision
- Perception something (good) is going on in South Hutchinson
- People wanting to be a part of the community vision

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

- Lack of activities for younger families and individuals
- Few attractions
- Lack of restaurants
- Lack of businesses
  
- Lack of a major retailer with full line of groceries
- Sprawling, spread out, covering a large geographical area

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

3A. Economic Development

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who</b>
	Begin a list of priorities; define economic development for South Hutchinson as involving multiple pieces	Partnerships involving city, school, county, businesses
	Business expansion by attracting companies to South Hutchinson	Partnerships involving city, school, county, businesses

**School Superintendent - USD 309 Nickerson-South Hutchinson (cont.)**

3B. Quality of Life

Working well now	Future	Who
High achieving schools	Continue	
	More recreation, activities, entertainment for young people in South Hutchinson and Hutchinson	

3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future	Who
	Define “community involvement” and what residents want to happen	
	Nurture leaders	

3D. Local Government

Working well now	Future	Who
	Continue current momentum	

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

- Continue focusing on economic development
- Define community assets
- Market strengths of South Hutchinson, determine the audience
- Utilize social media to promote the community in addition to Web sites
- Continue to use new technology to market the community

5A. What is your vision for the community?

- South Hutchinson – keeping and building on its strengths
- Searching for new opportunities

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

- South Hutchinson schools continue to achieve, move forward with 20<sup>th</sup> century thinking
- South Hutchinson, the place to be
- South Hutchinson starts conversation 10 years ago, continues to assess progress and looks at where it has been and where it is headed

## **LISTENING TOUR – MAY 2011**

### **Volunteer Groups (12 Attendees)**

1. What are the main strengths of South Hutchinson to use as a foundation for the future?

City departments work closely together  
Presence of local industry—Collins/Tyson  
Access to highway system—ideal for growth  
Community activities  
Schools  
Room to grow—for businesses and housing  
Fire department  
Safe community  
Softball diamonds  
Central location to larger cities  
Bike/hike trail  
Churches

2. What are the main challenges South Hutchinson faces?

Budget constraints  
Fire and EMS issues between cities  
Having a separate identity from Hutchinson  
Limited housing  
Limited community activities  
Potential for businesses to relocate out of South Hutchinson  
Lack of curb appeal  
Lack of retail and restaurants  
Limited public involvement  
Unpaved streets  
Limited opportunities for recreation

3. When you think of the following topics, what is working well for South Hutchinson now and what would you like to see for the future? Who should be involved in developing the future?

## Volunteer Groups (cont.)

### 3A. Economic Development

Working well now	Future	Who
Industrial base	Retain existing business	City, economic incentive vehicles
	Fulltime fire department	City
	More retail, restaurants and grocery store	City, franchisees, site locators
	Housing rehabilitation	Grant providers, City
ATV park		City
	Water park /Spray park	City
	Paved roads	City

### 3B. Quality of Life

Working well now	Future	Who
Ball diamonds		
Hike and bike paths	Larger park with rental shelter, restrooms, small section for RV's, tennis, basketball, fishing pond	City, County, community leaders, KS Wildlife and Parks department
Churches		
Annual events	Expand size and increase number	Public, volunteers, City leaders
Good schools		
Safe community		
Proximity to major retail outside of city	Have more retail in the City limits	
	Better housing with more variety and rentals	City, County, State, grant providers
	Recreation center for youth and adult sports leagues	Private business, Partnerships with nonprofits such as YMCA, City leaders

### 3C. Community Involvement

Working well now	Future	Who
Volunteer fire department		
Annual events (Trunk or Treat, for example)	Increase size of events and number of events; a centrally-located event	Community/city

**Volunteer Groups (cont.)**

3D. Local Government

<b>Working well now</b>	<b>Future</b>	<b>Who?</b>
Good employees	Continue to hire and retain good employees	City
	Televise city council meetings	City
Planning Commission	Commission member responsibilities more defined	City
	Establish business district with proper zoning, ordinances	City
	Improve curb appeal of main roads	Grants, City, volunteers, church groups
Fire Department	Change to fulltime	City, resident buy-in, grants
Police Department (Connection with other departments)		
	More information to citizens regarding City activities	City
	Consider quality of life issues when making important decisions (i.e., the types of businesses being recruited—do they enhance the quality of life for residents?)	City Council, Planning Commission, ordinances

4. What should South Hutchinson’s priorities be over the next three to five years?

(In order of rank)

- Curb appeal
- Economic growth
- Full-time Fire and EMS Department
- Community involvement
- Better housing options
- Community center with park

5A. What is your vision for the community?

- To grow and prosper as a community
- Economic growth and community involvement = better South Hutchinson
- Clean, growing, safe community
- Get local high school back
- Retail development occurring south of US-50 Highway
- Better housing with more options
- Separate identity from Hutchinson

**Volunteer Groups (cont.)**

5B. What should be a headline for the community in 10 years?

South Hutchinson has a new community center and water park

South Hutchinson is NOT Hutchinson

A great place to raise a family

**APPENDIX - A**  
**Common Recurring Themes – South Hutchinson Strategic Plan**  
**Listening Tour - May 2011**  
 ✓ = subject mentioned in specific listening tour session

<b>Question No. 1: Strengths</b>	<b>Businesses</b>	<b>City Empl</b>	<b>Comm Mtg</b>	<b>Eco Devo</b>	<b>Faith Based</b>	<b>Govt Org</b>	<b>K96 Corridor</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>School Supt</b>	<b>Vol Org</b>
Highway access	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Existing industry	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓*	✓	✓
Access to larger cities/ Hutchinson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Safety/low crime rate		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Churches		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Schools		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Available land/infrastructure/water		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
*And existing businesses										

<b>Question No. 2: Challenges</b>	<b>Businesses</b>	<b>City Empl</b>	<b>Comm Mtg</b>	<b>Eco Devo</b>	<b>Faith Based</b>	<b>Govt Org</b>	<b>K96 Corridor</b>	<b>Seniors</b>	<b>School Supt</b>	<b>Vol Org</b>
Business development/industry expansion	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
More restaurants		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
More retail		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Curb appeal/property cleanup		✓	✓	✓				✓		✓
Grocery store		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	

Question No. 4: Priorities 3 to 5 Years	Businesses	City Empl	Comm Mtg	Eco Devo	Faith Based	Govt Org	K96 Corridor	Seniors	School Supt	Vol Org
Curb appeal		√	√	√		√				√
Housing growth	√	√	√	√						√
Retail (restaurants, grocery, entertainment)		√	√		√		√**		√	
Community Center		√	√		√					√
Street improvements		√	√			√				
Medical/dental (see Question 3B Quality of Life)		√	√					√		
Community involvement	√									√
**recruit, retain & expand business										

Question No. 5A: Vision	Businesses	City Empl	Comm Mtg	Eco Devo	Faith Based	Govt Org	K96 Corridor	Seniors	School Supt	Vol Org
Industrial Expansion, Economic Growth	√	√	√	√		√	√	√		√
Retain Friendly Atmosphere/Small Town Values		√	√		√		√	√		√
Retail (restaurants, grocery, entertainment)		√		√	√		√			√
New & Improved Housing		√		√			√			√
City Parks/Wellness Center		√		√			√			
Education Growth, Return of High School		√								√
Curb Appeal										√