

Section 1

Executive Summary



US 24/40

A vision for the future

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Executive Summary

Background

Economic growth in southern Leavenworth County over the past decade has been strong. As both the number of business and residences has continued to increase, the need for better management of the public infrastructure has also increased. The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) has invested transportation funds in the improvement of US-24/40 through Leavenworth County to upgrade the highway from two lanes to four lanes. Because of the significant public investment in providing this improvement, it is important that the intended function of the highway be preserved as a safe and efficient transportation corridor. The improvement of the highway to four lanes has improved the mobility and safety of motorists in Leavenworth County.

Citizens of Leavenworth County have recognized that US 24/40 is a transportation resource that must be preserved for that purpose. The US 24/40 Corridor Study was initiated by state, regional, county and city officials and staff to preserve the transportation investment made in US 24/40. The project was initiated through the cooperation of the cities of Basehor and Tonganoxie, Leavenworth County, KDOT, and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC). This consortium selected the firm of Bucher, Willis and Ratliff Corporation (BWR), in cooperation with Jane Mobley Associates, Richard Caplan and Associates, and ETC Institute to assist them in the completion of the US 24/40 Corridor Study.

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to protect and preserve the transportation investment within the corridor by implementing sound corridor land use and transportation planning and management principles. Throughout the 14 month study duration, the public was invited through several different forums to provide meaningful input in developing community values to be embodied in the study. Those values included the desires to maintain a high level of mobility and safety on the highway, to preserve the rural drive experience of US 24/40, and to foster orderly economic growth in southern Leavenworth County.

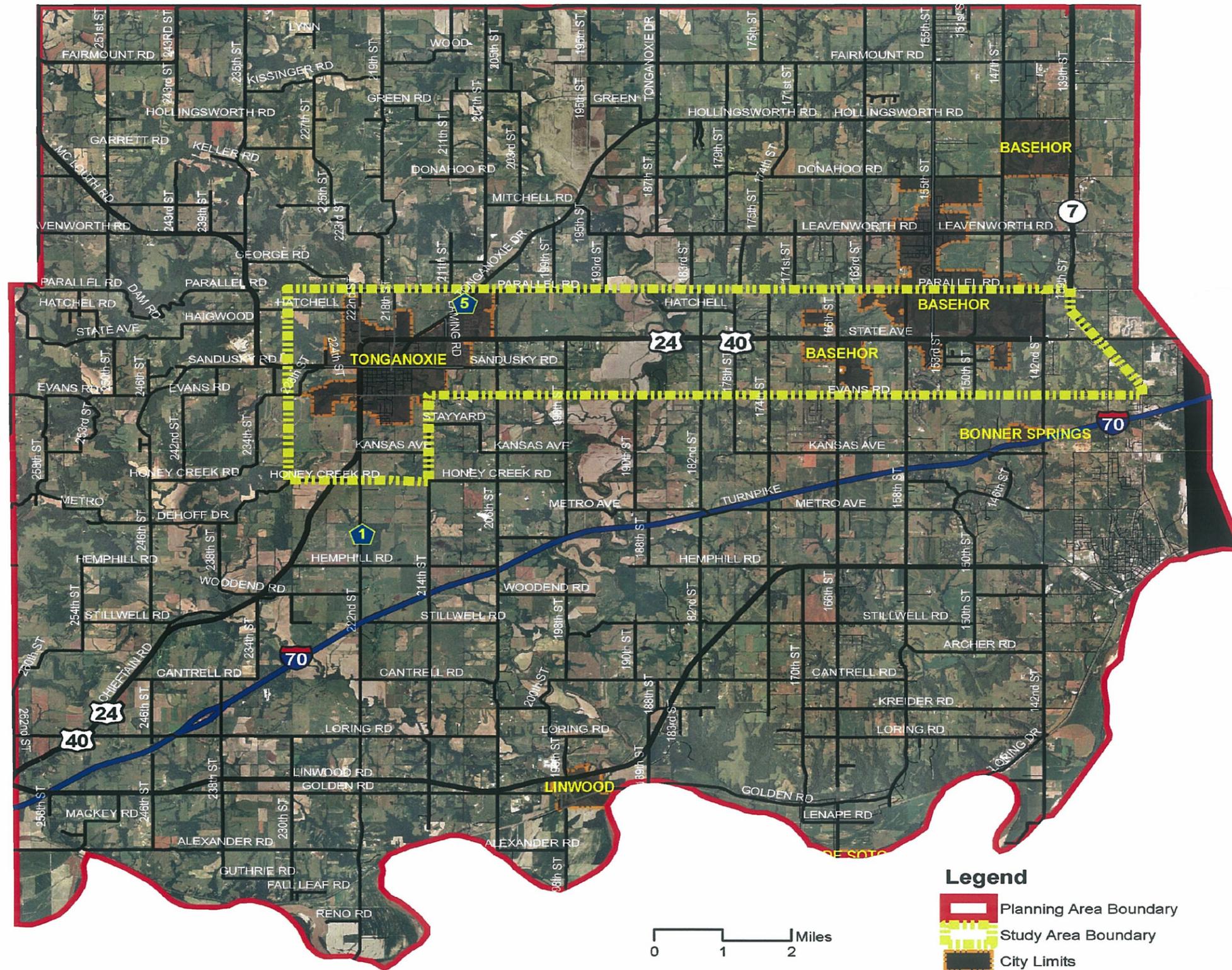
The study defined guidelines for managing traffic, access, land development densities, and design standards and set forth an implementation plan to achieve the study recommendations.

Study Area

The Study Corridor encompassed one mile either side of US 24/40 from Honey Creek Road on the west to K-7 on the east. Figure ES-1 depicts the study corridor. A larger area of Leavenworth County was considered with respect to its influence on the study corridor. This larger planning area included all of Leavenworth County south of Dempsey Road, as depicted in Figure ES-1.

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Figure ES-1 Study & Planning Area



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Recommendations

The recommendations that came out of the public involvement and technical review included development of:

- A plan for development densities by “transects” that help the county and the cities relate their land use plans and zoning policies to the corridor plan,
- Policies for development densities,
- A long range plan for access and traffic management,
- Identification of short range opportunities for access and traffic management,
- Policies for access and traffic management, and
- Design guidance for buildings, landscaping and buffers, lighting, signage, and drive experience.

An implementation plan identifies both short term and ongoing long term activities to achieve the recommendations. An important element of the implementation plan is the continuation of a project management team comprised of the partner jurisdictions that will continue to oversee the plan progress.

Development Plans and Policies

The land density recommendations have been tied to land density zones (or “transects”) that reflect the current long range land use plans of Leavenworth County, the city of Basehor, and the city of Tonganoxie. While it is anticipated that the zone boundaries will change over time, the underlying philosophy is to encourage development to occur contiguous to the two cities where new development can be supported by city services. The transects describe land use patterns (rural-to-urban, and back again urban-to-rural) and complement city and county land use and zoning policies.

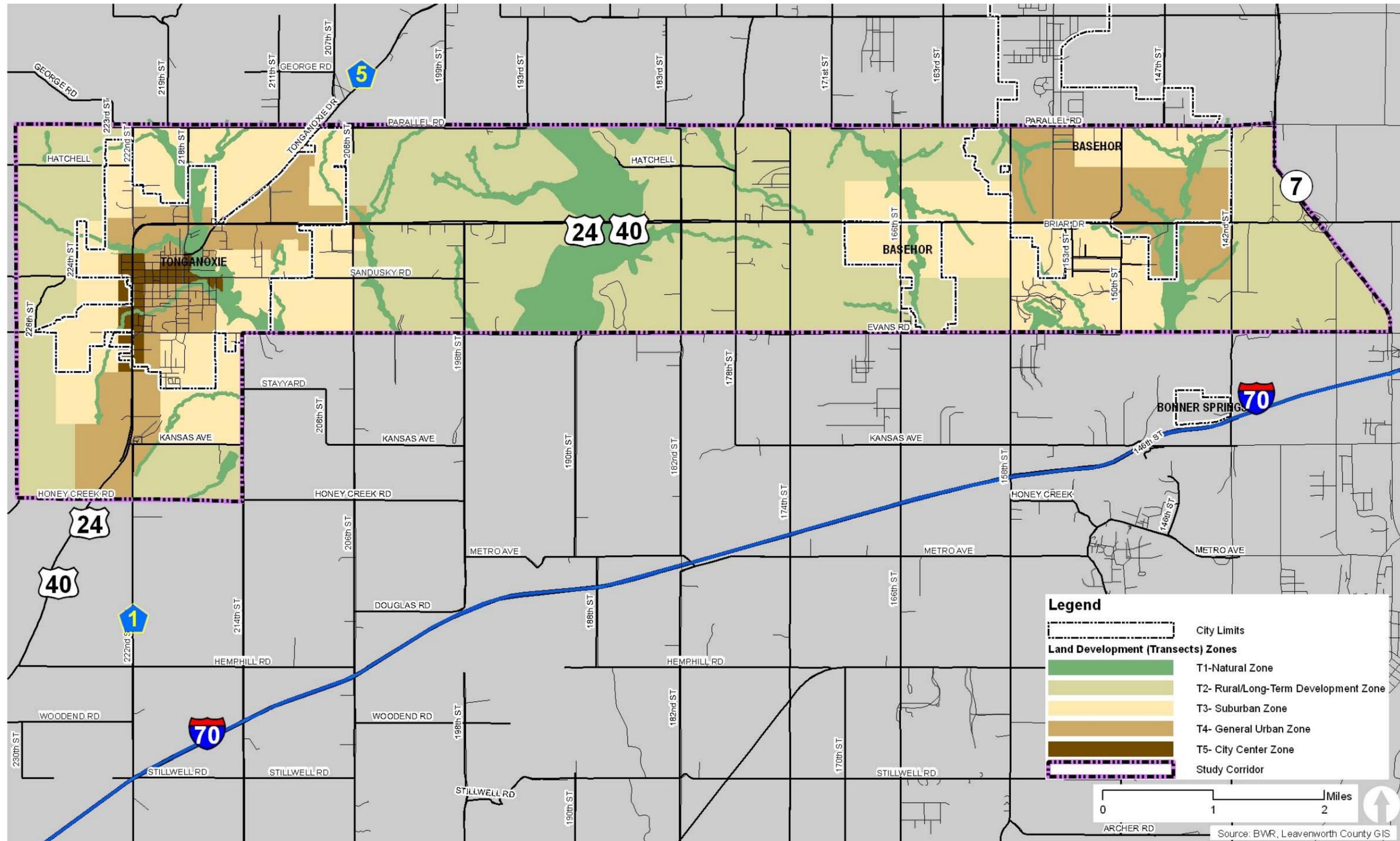
The local land use polices and regulations relate to transects—but, they serve different purposes. Transects are not local regulatory policies, rather, they are planning constructs that help frame the corridor land use analysis. As the land uses along 24/40 “transect” from urban-to-rural and back to urban, the development impacts change. The local land use regulations impose local land use authority. The transects “frame” or describe the land use transitions, but they do not regulate the way local zoning and subdivision ordinances do.

So what is the ultimate goal or “test” of an effective corridor plan? (After all, the plan covers only a 2-mile wide swath through south Leavenworth County.) The plan has engaged the entire regional community and the local jurisdictions. The corridor issues have spill-over effects and implications beyond the 2-mile corridor. Local jurisdictions are asked to adopt the plan recommendations through amendments to their own land plans and zoning and subdivision regulations (such as in overlay districts). Indeed, some of the solutions can be effective only if implemented at the local levels. For example, local street grid systems and parallel collector streets must be planned and platted outside the US 24/40 Highway right-of-way. The corridor study shows how these local street grids can (and must) relate to the highway, and how to adopt these local land use plans and policies.

The transects represent development that continues from T-1 (natural) to T-5 (City center). **Figure ES-2** depicts the transect zones for the corridor.

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Figure ES-2 Transect Plan



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Traffic and Access Management

The recommended long range (2030) traffic and access management plan must envision the transportation system needed to support the future land development. For US 24/40 to retain a high level of mobility and safety, a supporting system of arterial and collector streets will be needed to complement US 24/40. Figure ES-3 depicts the major street system that will be needed in the future. It also depicts the locations where full access to the highway will be permitted. Only right turns will be permitted at those locations where the major streets intersect US 24/40 and where full access has not been designated. It is anticipated that only those locations with full access will be permitted to have a traffic signal, and then only when the intersection meets appropriate warrants and only in consultation between local jurisdictions and KDOT.

Transportation policies governing highway access must be adopted to maintain the integrity of US 24/40 as an effective transportation facility. These traffic and access management policies have been summarized in the following statements:

- New entrance permits onto US 24/40 should be provided for public streets only.
- Streets with entrance permits onto US 24/40 must connect to all adjacent properties.
- Proposed plats of all properties within the two mile corridor must provide street connections to all the adjacent properties.
- The first access onto any street intersecting US 24/40 shall not be less than 400 feet away from the edge of the US 24/40 pavement.
- Traffic signals will be installed only where necessary and permitted by KDOT, and only where full access is allowed.
- All new intersections with US 24/40 should include right and left turning lanes off and onto US 24/40 as applicable.
- A traffic study shall be performed by a licensed traffic engineer for each requested access to US 24/40.

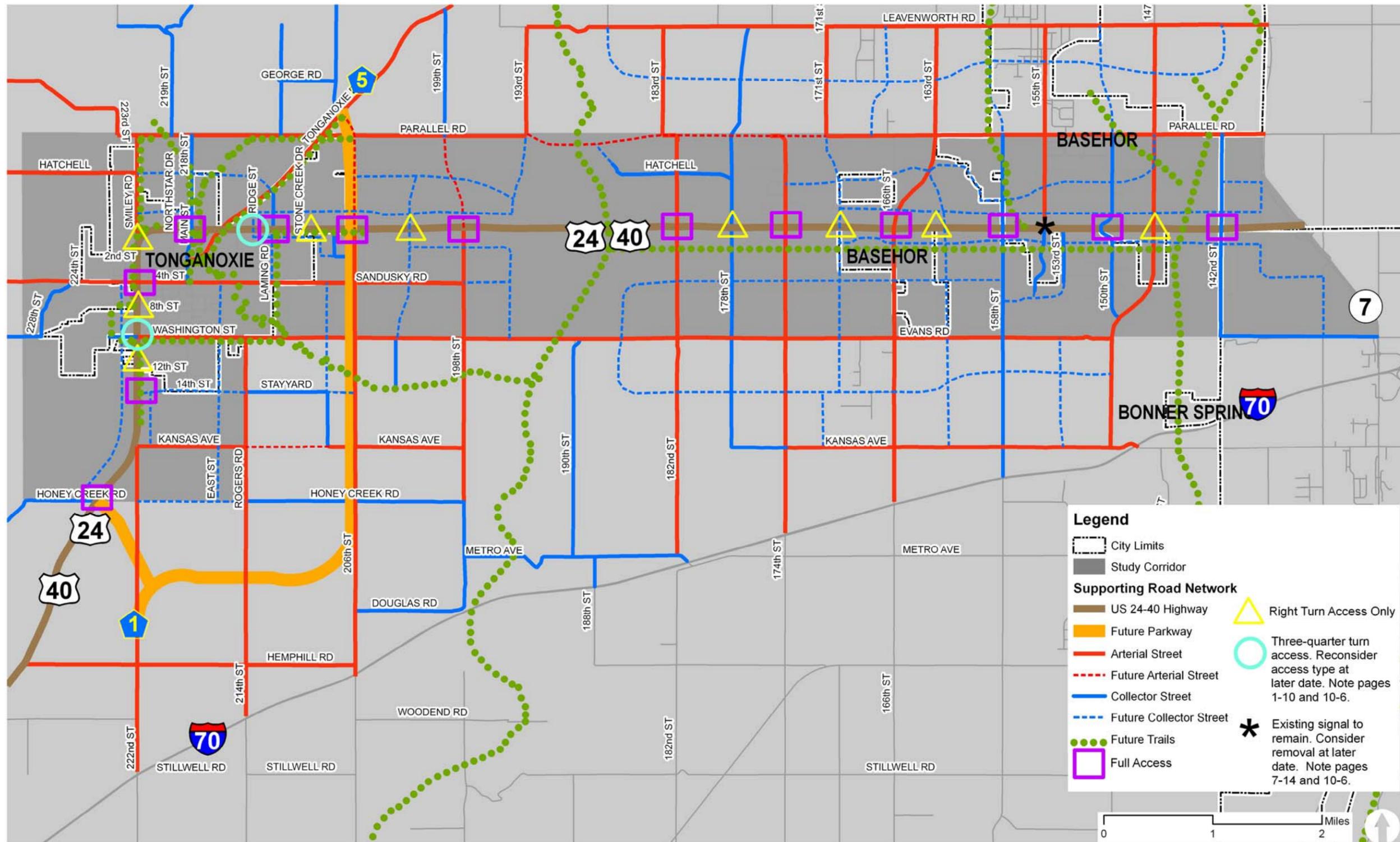
The recommendations of the long range traffic and access management plan are that full access will be limited to only the following intersecting streets in the corridor:

- County Road 1
- 14th Street
- 4th Street
- Main Street
- Laming Road
- 206th Street
- 198th Street
- 182nd Street
- 174th Street
- 166th Street
- 158th Street
- 155th Street (Existing signal to remain. Consider removal at later date. Note references on pages 7-14 and 10-6)
- 150th Street
- 142nd Street

Other recommendations of the long range traffic and access management plan on the corridor include:

- Medians will be constructed the full length of the corridor, with two lanes in each direction by such time that traffic volume thresholds reach the demand for four lanes throughout.
- Existing access in between the full access points will be restricted to right turn only by such time that alternative traffic circulation has been provided for through reverse frontage roads, except that Washington St. and Ridge St. in Tonganoxie will be restricted to three-quarter turn accesses. A three-quarter turn access would allow right and left turns from US 24/40, and right turns from the side street, but would not allow crossings or left turns from the side street. These three-quarter turn accesses will be re-considered if safety becomes an issue.
- Reverse frontage roads will be constructed to provide alternative traffic circulation and access for properties fronting US 24/40.

Figure ES-3 Long Range (2030) Access and Major Roadway Plan



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Design Policies

The citizens of southern Leavenworth County and the cities of Basehor and Tonganoxie were interested not only in managing the function of their transportation system and development patterns, but also in better directing the future form of transportation and land use in the corridor. One of the outcomes of the study was to identify design guidelines appropriate to the rural and urban development zones. Guidelines were developed for:

- Drive experience
- Pedestrian experience
- Median landscape treatments
- Buffers and screening
- Roadway lighting
- Parking lot lighting
- Building lighting
- Monument signs
- Wall signs
- Pole signs
- Gateway monuments
- Commercial building design
- Industrial building design
- Local and regional commercial building design
- Light industrial building design
- Moderate and high density residential building design

Implementation

An implementation plan was developed to identify the specific responsibilities for activating the plan. It is the intent of the plan that the corridor study report be adopted by reference as part of the Leavenworth County, city of Basehor, and city of Tonganoxie comprehensive plans. Following the adoption of this Corridor Study by the local governments, it is anticipated that the partner agencies will sign an interlocal agreement which will outline the intent of the agencies to support the corridor study recommendations. It is this common commitment of the partner jurisdictions to carry out the Corridor Study which will ensure that the recommendations are completed in accordance with the expectations of the citizens of Leavenworth County, Basehor, and Tonganoxie. It is expected that the partner agencies will continue to meet at regular intervals to review the progress towards implementing the plan.