



# Facts About Vision 20/20

## Citizen Participation Key to Charting Future Direction for Cowley County

### Vision 20/20 Volunteers

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Jeremy Nelson

Joni Rankin

Wayne Short

Joe Shriver

Mike Walton

Michael Wood

Yazmin Wood

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Marla Flentje  
*Facilitator*  
*The Austin Peters*  
*Group*

### What is Community Visioning?

Visioning is a planning process that helps citizens find agreement on what kind of future they want for their community. Through extensive information gathering and dialogue, citizens are asked what they value in their community, and what they want to preserve and change in the future. The common views and dreams of the whole community are shaped into a vision statement which becomes the foundation for a long-range plan for the future.

### How Does Community Visioning Work?

Over a 10-month period, residents of Cowley County will have the opportunity to contribute their views through one or more of the following:

- Over 25 **visioning focus groups** will be conducted; in each group, 10-15 citizens will be interviewed about their hopes, concerns and ideas for the future;
- An **opinion survey** will be widely distributed to citizens throughout the county by mail, the media, civic groups and other channels;
- A number of **community forums** will be held in the county seeking citizen hopes, concerns and ideas for the future, and later comments on a draft vision and strategic plan;
- A volunteer countywide task force will **draft a vision statement and strategic plan** for the future that will be widely circulated for comment and suggested revisions;
- Citizens and groups will be recruited as **vision partners** with responsibility to accomplish specific goals in the strategic plan.

### Who is Sponsoring Vision 20/20?

A new countywide entity, *Cowley First*, is the community visioning sponsor. *Cowley First* is a partnership among public, private and non-profit organizations whose purpose is to enhance economic vitality and quality of life in Cowley County for the benefit of all residents. These leaders believe the first step is to unite county residents and groups around a common plan for the community's overall future.

### What Are the Benefits of Visioning?

Many communities initially begin a visioning process as a way to enhance their competitive advantage in developing new business and jobs. But these communities report that additional benefits are realized as well, including:

- Increases in cooperative efforts among government, businesses and non-profit organizations in working toward common goals;
- Involvement of new volunteers, including young people, who bring creativity and ideas for a better community in the future;
- Renewed energy, optimism and motivation of leaders and volunteers to work for a better community;
- Improvements in quality of life assets such as health, education and recreation services;
- Greater success in attracting outside financing for community projects, because funding agencies can see linkages with an integrated community plan.

*Dream first and then act.*  
*Future generations will thank you.*  
- Barry Denk

### How Can I Get Involved?

Cowley First Vision 20/20 intends to break with traditions of the past when it comes to countywide planning. We hope to involve our neighbors from every city and rural area, and residents of all ages and walks of life in the county. **To be successful, we need the voice of every resident, student, employee and business owner in Cowley County.**

Please add your name to that of numerous volunteers who have already offered their time and talents to Vision 20/20. **You may call 620-221-9951 with your name, address and e-mail if you have one. We will keep you informed about when and how you can add your voice to making Cowley County a better place to live, work and play in the future.**