

from the desk of the Mayor

Greetings!

This annual report is intended to bring awareness to the many activities and accomplishments that happened in Ottawa in 2008. We produce this report as a way to inform you, tax-paying citizens and business owners, about the activities of your local government and City staff. You have chosen to make Ottawa your home and/or place of business. It's our job to do our best to preserve the small, hometown atmosphere while fostering an environment for growth, opportunity and economic development.

With a population of 12,828, Ottawa is the county seat and the largest city in Franklin County. Ottawa is a thriving city that has managed to grow, yet maintain its small-town culture. Ottawa respects diversity and tradition, and takes positive steps to protect both. Commissioners and employees of the City of Ottawa take great pride in providing services to the citizens of Ottawa, and work to continue to improve the city that we call home. Here are some of the highlights of 2008:

- Approved the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2008 for the City of Ottawa, anticipating both short-term needs and long-term forecasts for the future.
- Approved a Travel Center TIF project to be located near I-35 and K-68, along with many other commercial business lots available for development.
- Created a second TIF District - the South 59 District, which will include a Love's Travel Center just south of I-35 on Highway 59. Infrastructure construction will occur in 2009 with the building construction scheduled for 2010.
- Implemented a formal wellness program for City employees.
- Formulated plan for continuing sidewalk and street rehabilitation programs for 2009, and beyond.
- Completed over \$230,000 street rehabilitation projects.
- Continued to support the Youth in Government program by mentoring young citizens interested in the local government.

2008 was a year of challenges and opportunities, and 2009 looks to be even more so. It will be stressful. Budget cuts will have to be made as we lose more State funding and the downturn of the economy continues. Please review this annual report and learn more about the services the City provides and the ongoing community projects that make Ottawa a great place to live.


Gene Ramsey, Mayor

City Hall • 101 S. Hickory • Ottawa, Kansas 66067-2347
Phone: (785) 229-3637 • Fax: (785) 229-3639 • www.ottawaks.gov



ANNUAL REPORT
CITY OF OTTAWA 2008



City Manager's Office Richard U. Nienstedt City Manager



Thank you for taking the time to read this Annual Report. We all benefit as a direct result of the many things that the City Commission and City employees do every day. This report details some of those things that happen “behind the scenes” that help to make Ottawa a great place to live and work. I hope that you find it informative and interesting.

2008 marked my first full year of service to the City of Ottawa. I feel very fortunate to now call Ottawa my home. Whatever successes I have had in this first year are because of the City Commissioners, employees and

citizens who are all actively engaged and working to improve the quality of life for all Ottawans. It is my pleasure and honor to serve as your City Manager and I look forward to an even more successful future working together.

Both 2008 and 2009 are years with troubling economic uncertainties. As a result of careful planning and conservative financial management, our community is very fortunate to have a sound and stable financial foundation. The Kansas state seal contains the motto— “Ad Astra, per Aspera,” a Latin phrase which means “to the stars, through difficulties.” This motto, adopted in 1861, refers not only to the pioneering spirit of the early settlers, but also to the difficult times Kansas went through before becoming a state. John James Ingalls, a powerful voice in early Kansas history, suggested the motto as an expression of “the aspiration of Kansas to reach the unattainable; its dream is the realization of the impossible.”

Celebrate our rich and powerful heritage. Kansas is a land of determination and strength, and this tradition will see us through the challenges of 2008 and 2009, and, once again, will lead us to the stars — and beyond.

City of Ottawa
City Hall
P.O. Box 60
101 S. Hickory
Ottawa, Kansas 66067-2347
Phone: 785-229-3600
Fax: 785-229-3639
www.ottawaks.gov

Youth in Government Lisa Rivers, ECKAN Sponsor

The Youth in Government program celebrated another successful year of positive youth engagement. Members of the Youth in Government Program celebrated their efforts of lobbying Ottawa’s City Commission to ban smoking in public places when the Clean Air Ordinance took effect on June 1, 2008. According to Anna Stone, one of the Youth in Government members, “It’s nice to know that the youth of Ottawa do have a voice and can make positive things happen for our future.”

In March, Youth in Government members took on another serious health concern with teens - underage drinking. On March 5, Youth in Government members teamed up with the Youth Action Council and Teen Court to present a “Take it Back” Community Briefing, a local event which is part of a national movement to make underage drinking a subject of public discussion. The event provided an opportunity for the youth of Ottawa to speak against what is often deemed “normal behavior” for their generation. This successful event came as a result of two months of work, which included the production of a student video applauded by the Kansas Enrichment Network.



Youth in Government representatives Dalton Wadkins, Kevin Tyner, Anna Stone and Abby Guenther are sworn in to the program by City Commissioners Rocky Fleer and Blake Jorgensen, Mayor Gene Ramsey, and City Commissioner Linda Reed.

Youth in Government members travel with Ottawa’s City Commission to national conferences, and work to emulate the successes of other cities. Ottawa’s Youth in Government program, sponsored by ECKAN, is showing youth across the country that their voice is important and that they too can make a difference.

For information, please call

Lisa Rivers, ECKAN Volunteer Center Director,
at 785-242-7450, ext. 205, or at lrivers@eckan.org.

Finance/City Clerk

Scott Bird, Director of Finance • Carolyn Snethen, City Clerk



Scott Bird, Director of Finance, reviews the city budget.

The Finance Department provides resources and recommendations on matters relating to taxation and licensing, implements adopted legislative measures and provides administrative support to carry out priorities as established by the governing body. In addition, the department assists in the implementation of tax relief programs, including economic development tax abatements and tax increment financing (TIF). This department acts as a collection point for all city revenues and distributes payment for all city expenditures. Major department functions include: accounts payable and receivables; debt issuance; utility billing, meter reading and utility collections; payments, fines and fees; enforced collection procedures; processing of applications for the Utility Assistance Program; registration and licensing for the retail sale of alcohol, cereal malt beverages and tobacco; animal registration; taxi services and itinerant vendor registration.

The Building Maintenance division, a part of the Finance Department, handles custodial and maintenance duties for City Hall, the Police Department and Municipal Auditorium. In addition, staff is responsible for the care of other public properties such as the Carnegie Building, the historic (Old) City Hall Building located at Fourth and Walnut, and the South Annex facility.

Special mention should be made of the achievement of the Master Municipal Clerk designation awarded by International Institute of Municipal Clerks to Carolyn Snethen, who was promoted to the position of City Clerk. The City Clerk Division records official proceedings for all meetings of the governing body; maintains custody of minutes, resolutions, ordinances, and other official records; prepares reports for and communicates with the city manager and the governing body; coordinates the development of economic development tax exemption applications; tracks special assessments and development impact fees. In addition, this division provides access of open records information to the general public; works with individual citizens as well as local community groups, and assists in the development and receipt of petitions related to various community matters.

The treasurer's division took the administrative lead for another weather-related FEMA event in 2008, the fourth such event since 2001.

The cooperative effort between the Public Works, Utility and Finance Departments allowed the city to recapture almost \$100,000 in overtime and materials the city would have otherwise had to absorb. The Finance Department also sustained its commitment to improve the City's Disaster Recovery Plan. In 2007, all historic Governing Body minutes were recorded and stored back to 1871. In 2008, all ordinances since 1899 were copied to electronic media and are being stored offsite.

The rapid and varied changes in the world economy affected the city in a number of ways. Along with the City Manager, the Finance Department helped meet those changes by meeting with each of its banks to reassure the public in regard to the city's fiduciary responsibilities. The City also met with the County Appraiser and continues to communicate with county, state and federal officials as it seeks to safeguard the City's interests.

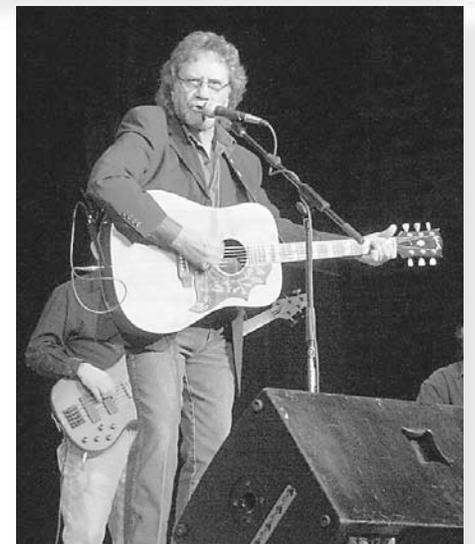
**For additional information please call 785-229-3600
or visit www.ottawaks.gov**



Municipal Auditorium

Shonda Stitt, Administrative Manager

Construction began in 1919 on the Ottawa Municipal Auditorium to honor those who lost their lives in World War I. Its continuing mission is to serve the community as a cultural, entertainment and educational facility. Ongoing productions include youth matinees, the Ottawa Police Department's McGruff Club events, local job training activities, private parties and receptions, school programs and more. Revenues to cover operational and maintenance expenses are predominantly derived from City property tax, supplemented by ticket sales and rental fees.



David Frizzell in concert.

The 2008 Auditorium productions included Ottawa High School's presentation of "Bye, Bye Birdie" as well as band and vocal concerts. Sabrina's Dance Academy presented their annual dance recital along with holding dance/musical theatre classes; Ottawa Suzuki Strings performed their annual Christmas concert; and the Ottawa Jaycees once again hosted the Haunted House. Total rentals were up from 2007, as were total number of usage days, but the income generated by these rentals was down slightly.

The Auditorium is available for many types of private events as well as public performances.

**For additional information, please call
Shonda Stitt, Administrative Manager, at 785-242-8810.**

Public Works

Andy Haney, Director

The Public Works Department has 23 full-time employees and includes the Streets Division, the Parks and Cemeteries Division, and the Fleet Management Division. The Ottawa Municipal Airport and Flood Control are facilitated by the Public Works Department, but are not staffed city divisions.

The US 59 Highway between Ottawa and Lawrence is currently under construction. As a result of this project, the highway will bypass the City of Ottawa. What has been Main Street/US 59 will no longer be state highway and will be “turned back” to Ottawa. In December 2008, KDOT agreed to repair storm drainage structures and resurface parts of “old” 59 prior to the City becoming responsible for the upkeep of the road.

A much-needed streets rehabilitation program was completed in 2008. Killough Construction completed asphalt overlays, pothole patching, crack sealing and cleaning in partnership with the City Streets Division personnel. The total cost for these repairs was approximately \$231,437.

- Cedar Street (5th to 7th)
- Elm Street (19th to 21st)
- 15th Street (Hickory to Cedar)
- 3rd Street (Poplar to Cherry)
- Cherry Street (3rd to 4th)
- 11th Street (Cedar to Mulberry)
- Mulberry Street (North to Dundee)
- Sections of road in Highland Cemetery



Accessible parking is now available on Main Street. A design compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) was developed and two prototype ramps were constructed, one near Rex's Barber Shop at and another at the Crystal Plaza Theater. Only one accessible space was designated at each location, but a second (van accessible) space can be created on the opposite side of the ramp by installing appropriate signs. Feedback and evaluation continues and will help determine the location and design of future spaces.

The parks of Ottawa continue to be a source of pride and recreation for our citizens and visitors to our city. A grant from the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks paid for 75% of the project to repair and resurface trails at Heritage Park, Kanza Park and the Prairie Spirit Rail Trail (between 5th and 17th). Our regular park events continue to be very popular. A significant rain event led up to (and through) the Power of the Past Antique Engine and Tractor Show in September, but the Power of the Past Antique Tractor Association took great care to preserve the grounds of Forest Park. The following week, the Ol' Marais River Run hosted 1,480 antique cars. The Over the Road Gang also took great care to protect the park during their event. While city crews must take some steps to rehabilitate the grounds after these large events, the effort necessary to restore the grounds was minimized by the efforts of the clubs using the park, and the help and support of these clubs is appreciated.



Flood control continues to be a priority. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) had recommended adjustments be made to the north floodgate on the Main Street bridge as a result of difficulties closing that structure prior to the 2007 flood. We completed inspection and adjustment of the north gate across Main Street in cooperation with the USACE during April 2008. The levee was inspected by the USACE and the levee received an “Acceptable” rating, the highest rating awarded by USACE.

The airport continues to draw the most business on Sundays. There were 5,054 daily “operations” (take-off or landing) reported by the Airport Manager for the year, with Sundays being the most busy (1,014). Airport fuel sales reported by the Airport Manager during 2008 amounted to 7,895 gallons. The City Commission authorized application to the FAA for federal funding support of two projects. Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) Data Sheets have been submitted to the FAA for:

- property acquisition at the south boundary of the current Airport property; and
- pavement improvements to the Runway 17-35.

**For additional information, call 785-229-3630,
or visit www.ottawaks.gov.**

Utilities

Jim Bradley, Director

The Utilities Department provides wastewater collection and treatment, electric generation and distribution, water treatment and distribution services to the City of Ottawa. The Department also operates a warehouse that supports these services. In addition, the Department operates a Computer Assisted Drafting (CAD) division, providing mapping services to all other departments. Benefits of the City owned utilities include better and local control over rates, responsiveness to the public, quality control, coordinated planning efforts with other City functions and subsidization of some public services and activities using utility revenues. Combined, the utilities have 48 employees.

Wastewater Collection and Treatment

The wastewater plant, which began operating in 2004, continues to meet and exceed all State and Federal regulations. With a 2008 budget of \$1.6 million, the 2.6 Million Gallon per Day (MGD) plant averaged treating 1.3MGD. The Collection Division continued to make improvements to the collection system by replacing over 1,400 feet of gravity sanitary sewer lines, making various repairs and replacing existing manholes. This has been a very productive year for these Divisions, as the Princeton lift station was replaced with a new above-ground station, including pumps rated at 250 gallons per minute. This upgrade will provide for additional growth in the southeast area of the community. The Collection Division has been instrumental in the design phase of new sanitary sewer service to provide for growth in the northeast area as well. The construction phase of the project will occur as growth occurs in the area.

Water Treatment and Distribution

The City of Ottawa provided over 466 million gallons of treated water in 2008 to residences, businesses, four Rural Water Districts and the City of Princeton. Staff is very proud of the fact there have been no violations of State or Federal regulations for over 28 years. The Distribution Division continued to make improvements to the system by replacing and upgrading water lines and preparing for growth by providing inspection services to new subdivisions to ensure proper installation of the water and sanitary sewer infrastructure. The Water Distribution Division and Water Treatment Plant personnel have been extremely active during 2008 being involved in the design of a new booster pump station, 16" water main, and new water tower on the northeast side of Ottawa. These improvements will provide service to this area, along with increased reliability and improved fire service. Both Divisions have also been involved in the design of the new 16" line from the Water Treatment Plant to the north tower. This improvement will provide additional reliability for the north side of the community, as well as help to provide for the growth in the northeast quadrant of the City. The Water Treatment Plant has also begun to work on the design of an additional clear well to ensure reliability of services. The construction is scheduled to be completed in 2009 or 2010.

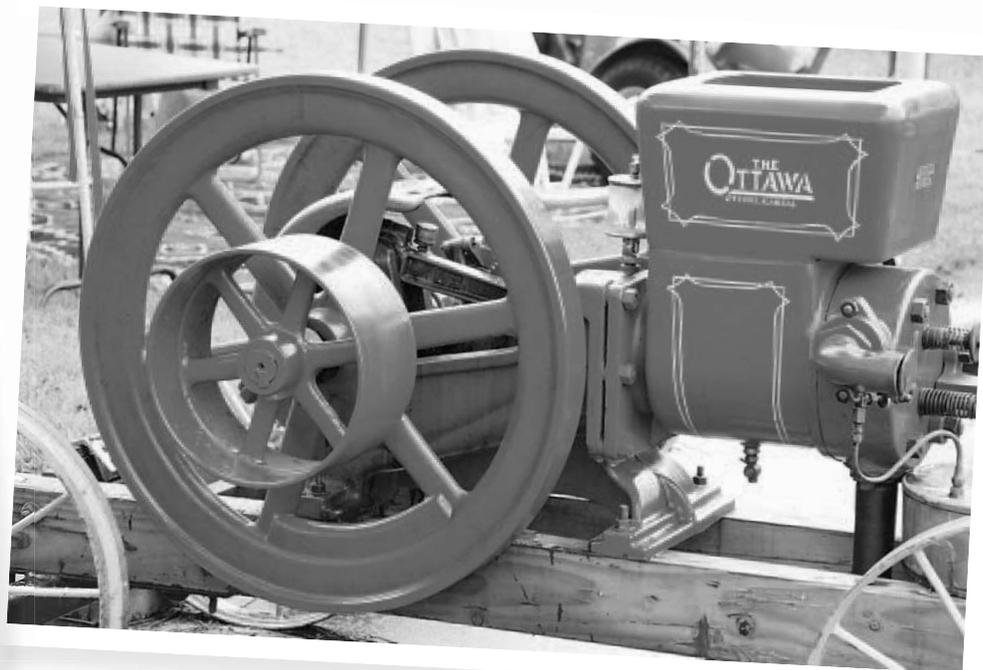


Electric Generation and Distribution

The Distribution Division has provided for growth by extending services and undertaking an aggressive line clearing program to help eliminate outages during storms. Over 145 million kilowatt hours were provided to our consumers, with over 99.9% reliability during 2008. The Distribution Division and Power Plant have also been deeply involved in the design and construction of a \$9 million dollar substation and transmission line, with completion of the project scheduled for June 2009. The Power Plant has completed several projects, including replacement of boiler tubes, installation of UPS systems, monitoring systems for the north water tower, programmable logic controls, protective relays, and the start of a three-year program to replace breakers in the Second Street substation. The Electric Utility continues to investigate the possible addition of new generation to ensure we are a self-sufficient utility, even during peak periods.

**For additional information, please call 785-229-3710,
or visit www.ottawaks.gov.**





- Completed \$230,000 street rehabilitation project
- Annexed approximately 140 acres into the City of Ottawa
- Purchased new fire ladder truck
- Adopted a Storm Water Management Policy
- Adopted an Identity Theft Prevention Program
- Serious crime rates decreased 15% from last year, the 4th consecutive year of decrease - dropped 56.8% since 2004. Less serious crime decreased 28.6 % from last year.
- Approved the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 2008 for the City of Ottawa, Kansas, anticipating both short-term needs and long-term forecasts for the capital improvements projects through 2024
- Participating member of the "Clean 14" National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Storm Water Phase II Consortium
- Added accessible parking on Main Street
- Developed Transportation Master Plan
- Facilitated ongoing collaborative meetings with USD 290, Franklin County, Ottawa University and Neosho County Community College
- Approved a Travel Center TIF project to be located near I-35 and K-68, along with many other commercial business lots available for development.
- Created second TIF District - the South 59 District, which will include a Love's Travel Center just south of I-35 on Highway 59. Infrastructure construction will occur in 2009 with the building construction scheduled for 2010.
- Implemented a formal wellness program for city employees
- Formulated plan for continuing sidewalk and street rehabilitation programs for 2009 and beyond
- Improved communication between the city and the community

2008 HIGHLIGHTS



Police Department

Dennis Butler, Chief

During 2008, the police department operated with 31 employees and a budget of \$2.06 million. Major services include a 24-hour patrol, a school resource officer; D.A.R.E. program, criminal investigations, animal control and crime prevention.

Serious crime rates in Ottawa (Part I crime as measured by the FBI) decreased 15% compared to 2007. This is the fourth consecutive year of reduction in serious crime, which has dropped a total of 56.8% since 2004. Other, less serious, crime decreased 28.6 % last year compared with the year before and all crime (Part I and less serious) decreased a collective 21.6% last year compared with 2007.

Police Chief Dennis Butler continued his service on the Governor's Law Enforcement subcommittee for Domestic Violence Training. The subcommittee completed a major initiative to create a "train-the-trainer" curriculum that will be used across the state of Kansas to train local law enforcement officers in the best investigative practices involving domestic violence-related crimes. The Domestic Violence Unit of the Ottawa Police Department continues to work toward holding batterer's accountable and helping victims end the violence in their lives. The police department plans to apply for another two-year federal grant to add additional resources in support of this mission.

Other mini-grants allowed the department to purchase new equipment such as ballistic vests and equipment without using city funds. On December 1, 2008, the Ottawa Police Department, Franklin County Sheriff's office and the Wellsville Police Department collaborated on a multi-jurisdictional Records Management System (RMS) designed to improve record-keeping and records-sharing, and allows for the more efficient use of personnel and resources. This project was largely funded by the Sheriff's Office, with the ongoing maintenance shared by each agency. Additional phases and upgrades are scheduled for 2009.

The police department's volunteer unit, Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) continued to provide outstanding service to our community. VIPS and reserve police officers volunteered more than 1700 hours in 2008 resulting in nearly \$34,000 worth of service to our city. VIPS

members can be seen volunteering in the municipal court, in the police administrative office, at parades, special events like the drive-by flu shot clinic at Ransom Memorial Hospital, uniformed patrol, crime prevention and traffic control. The efforts of VIPS members help our agency provide more services to the community while allowing police officers to focus on crime fighting.



Service of the 2008 VIPS members allows police officers to focus on crime fighting.



Kansas Attorney General Steven Six, D.A.R.E. Officer Rick Geist and Police Chief Dennis Butler at the D.A.R.E. camp.

Community service remains a focus. The 23rd Annual DARE camp was attended by 80 USD 290 6th graders. The Kansas D.A.R.E. Officers Association presented the Police Department with the 2008 President's Award in recognition of the department's outstanding commitment to the Annual D.A.R.E. Camp and support of D.A.R.E. in Kansas. The program was identified as the longest running camp in Kansas and serves as a model for others. The 28th annual McGruff Club focused on safety programs with live entertainment, averaging about 350 children and parents at each event. Finally, the police department held its fourth annual "Cops on Top" fundraiser for Special Olympics, with police officers perched atop a local restaurant for 48-hours raising \$3,500 for Kansas Special Olympics. This marks the 23rd year that the department has participated in a Special Olympics fundraiser.

For additional information, please call 785-229-2561, or visit www.ottawaks.gov.



Fire Department Jeff Carner, Chief

The Ottawa Fire Department (OFD) had another active year. During 2008, we battled 19 building fires with an estimated fire loss of \$248,400, the lowest loss in many years. We received a Federal grant for \$118,750, which was used to replace the self-contained breathing apparatus used by the department. We also purchased a new aerial truck, significantly enhancing our capabilities. This truck is now referred to as Tower #1 and replaces a 28-year-old vehicle. This new truck not only meets the current needs of the community, but should also meet future requirements for many years to come.

Two staff members were promoted to the position of Lieutenant, and have assumed additional duties within the department. The department currently has 20 career members and is supported by a volunteer membership of 7. These volunteers make considerable contributions to the organization, and we greatly appreciate their service to our community.

Fire service in general has evolved from an organization whose primary responsibility was fire suppression to an emergency services organization that provides fire suppression, fire prevention, fire code enforcement, fire investigation, fire inspection, plan review, emergency medical services, hazardous materials mitigation and specialized rescue operations. The department is constantly evaluating our policies, procedures and standard operating guidelines to help ensure we are delivering the best possible services to our citizens. One significant change made during 2008 is the implementation of a self-inspection program for some businesses, allowing them to conduct their own fire safety evaluation. This program has been well received by those participating and has allowed our staff to place additional focus in other areas.

The department continues to emphasize fire prevention and training programs. We have increased the number and quality of educational programs offered to the public throughout the year, as well as the number of training hours our staff receives.



Above, local school children learn about fire fighting from Lt. Tony Reed. At left, Ottawa firefighters participate in a training exercise.

We would like to remind the public of the importance of having an adequate number of properly installed and working smoke detectors. Through the help of the American Red Cross, the OFD has detectors available at no cost, with installation assistance if needed.

For additional information, please call 785-229-3700, or visit www.ottawaks.gov.

Municipal Court James Campbell, Judge • Joyce Hendrix, Prosecutor

The City of Ottawa operates a court system using a Municipal Judge, City Prosecutor, Court Clerk and an assistant Court Clerk. The Municipal Court continues to be aided by volunteers from the VIPs (Volunteers in Police Service). The Municipal Court is located in the Law Enforcement Center and had an annual budget of \$216,151 in 2008. The municipal court adjudicates misdemeanor crimes.

During 2008, court personnel continued to attend conferences and serve on boards at the Kansas Association of Court Management. The physical layout of case files in the municipal court office was improved, creating a more efficient retrieval process. Through the use of technology, staff began disseminating electronic media to defense counsel for discovery purposes, and court personnel received authorization to begin live submissions of electronic data. This process will allow the

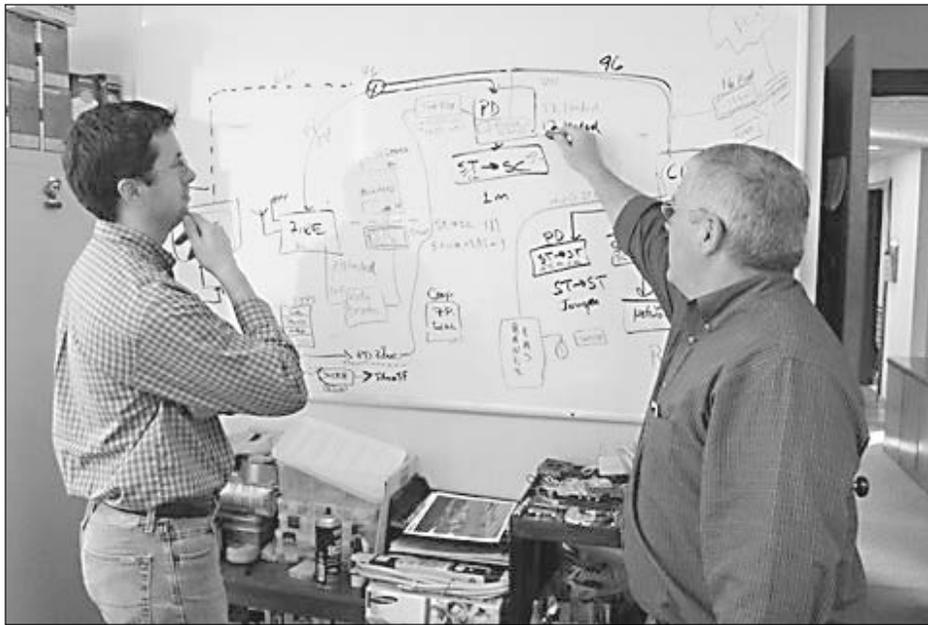
court to electronically file abstracts of records from the court. This process will also submit notifications to suspend driving privileges and notifications to reinstate driving privileges as required by legislative mandates.

With approved funding, the Municipal Court hopes to improve services even more during 2009 by installing a new court management software system. The new software will eventually link with the local multi-jurisdictional records management system to eliminate manual entry of traffic citations.

For additional information, please call 785-242-5333, or visit www.ottawaks.gov.

Information Technology

Chuck Bigham, Director



Paul Sommer and Chuck Bigham evaluate the City computer network.

The Information Technology (IT) staff fully supports all city departments and buildings, and works in conjunction with the Franklin County IT department, including support for the new multi-jurisdictional Records Management System (RMS) for law enforcement.

The IT Department supports more than one hundred fifty network-attached devices, PC workstations, printers and servers. As planned, older workstations were replaced with more capable hardware. Windows XP continues to be the standard operating system on most PCs; Microsoft Office 2003 is used nearly exclusively for administrative functions. PC-based servers provide database support and management of storm event trouble tickets and dispatch; cemetery records; administration of the storm water, pavement and road departments; fire calls and reports; building permits and more.

2009 will bring further, cost-effective enhancements to the City and its productive use of technology. City email is now managed and administered locally by City staff. A new city email and website name was added; ottawaks.gov allows the City of Ottawa to be more readily identified as a government agency. The technology enhancements, support and maintenance managed by the IT Department provide the ability to fully manage our own technology, and allows us to provide better performance, plan disaster recovery programs and quickly correct any problems internally, without delay.

Government Access Channel

Mat Simonson, Multimedia Specialist, has expanded the Government Access Channel (GAC) throughout the year. Filming of community events continues to be a big part of the GAC, and the DVD collection of area events continues to grow. Community events such as the Ol' Marias River Run and Power of the Past Antique Engine and

Tractor Show are filmed and edited into a lasting DVD program, with the capability to be aired on a national television. Many DVD copies of these events are provided to sponsors and are made available for public purchase.

The GAC dual "ticker tape" at the bottom of the screen for local weather, program schedules and upcoming community events continues to evolve. City Commission meetings are rebroadcast, frequently before coverage by print media sources is available. Multiple programming sources can now play during both day and night. Website enhancements at www.ottawaks.gov expand the reach of the GAC to the Web, so everyone with an Internet connection can view (via streaming video) Commission Meetings, Legislative Coffees and area events.

**For additional information, please call 785-229-3641
or visit: www.ottawaks.gov**



Robin Flory, Director

Ottawa Library is committed to providing quality library services to the citizens of the community. The Ottawa Library is experiencing growth and innovation. Informational and recreational reading, listening and viewing opportunities are just the beginning. NExpress, the new online shared circulation system, is increasing the speed of receipt of requested material from the other libraries, as well as allowing patrons to check account status and renew books online. The NExpress Shared Catalog, implemented over the Thanksgiving holiday, provides a catalog with more than 390,000 items and a network of 13 library collections, with an expected 5 additional libraries joining in early 2009. The library continues to provide access to the Ancestry database, an online genealogy resource. In 2008, circulation increased 1.5 percent and items lent to other libraries increased by more than a third.

Public access computers are very popular, and their use continues to increase. The Library continually upgrades and improves technology to provide the best service possible. The Summer Reading Program and Adult Summer Reading program participation increased again in 2008. The used bookstore at 209 E. Second, managed by Friends of the Ottawa Library, netted over \$7,000 in book sales, and memberships added over \$1,500 in benefits to the Ottawa Library. Unable to visit the Library? Volunteers prepare and deliver library materials to residents who cannot visit in person.

Robin Flory, Director, joined the Ottawa Library in 2008 and has brought a new perspective on services and opportunities to be found in our local library. Several areas in the library were reorganized in 2008 allowing better use of our space.

**For additional information, please call the Library
at 785-242-3080 or visit: www.ottawalibrary.org**

Planning & Codes Administration

Wynndee S. Lee, Director

The staff of the Planning, Zoning and Codes Department administers the City's Comprehensive Plan; Zoning and Subdivision Regulations; provides support to the Planning Commission and Appeals Boards; and enforces multiple building codes and local laws dealing with nuisances, such as weeds, junk debris and inoperable vehicles, and other community development issues as they arise.

The department regularly oversees the approval of preliminary plats and final plats for subdivisions such as Ottawa Trails, Eastgate and Albright's Additions. Subdivisions such as these have added to Ottawa's commercial lots and residential development areas. New single family home building permits remained flat in 2008, and are forecasted to remain flat in the near future. The largest new construction projects include the Hasty Awards Building and Select Steel, both in the Industrial Park. Remodeling work continues to be strong, including the Farm Bureau building on 17th Street, the Subway remodel in Wal-Mart, and the renovation of USD 290's administrative offices on Main Street. Total permits issued for new construction or remodels were valued at over \$25 million dollars. Plans for upcoming projects include Love's Travel Center and several new churches are also being developed. In 2008, the City of Ottawa grew by nearly 140 acres through annexation. In addition, 16 Neighborhood Revitalization applications were received.



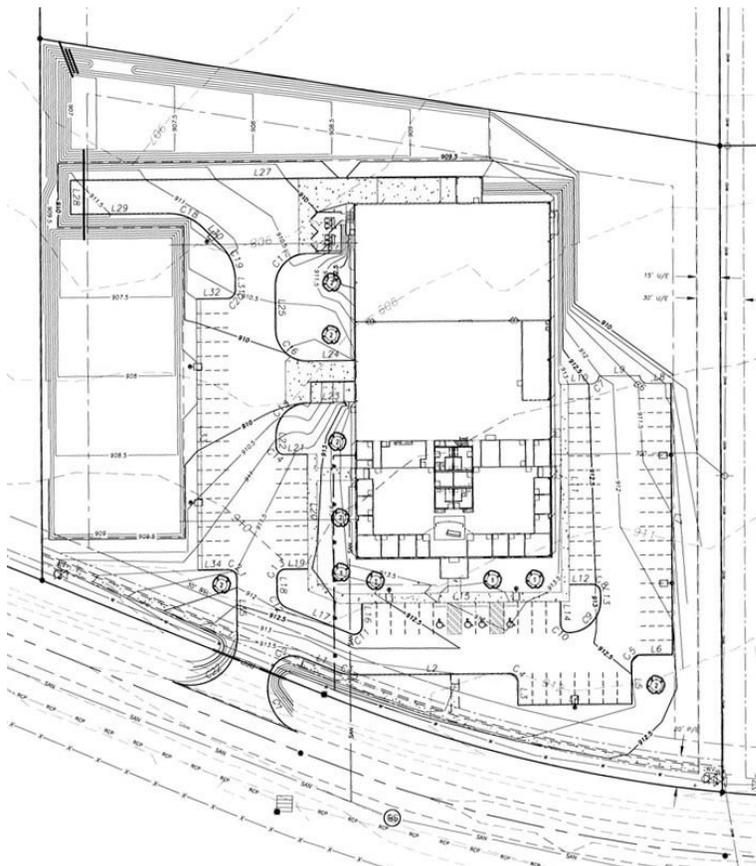
One of the larger tasks accomplished in 2008 was the adoption of updated building codes. Staff reviewed the code, added any amendments needed, and met with contractors and designers on specific changes. The City adopted the following 2006 International Construction Codes: Building, Residential 1 & 2 Dwelling, Energy Conservation, Fuel Gas, Mechanical, Plumbing, Property Maintenance, Fire, and the 2005 National Electric Code. The city also adopted an ordinance for Private Sewage as well a set of guidelines for construction of pole barn type buildings.

TIF, Tax Increment Financing, is a financing tool designed to help construct public roads, utilities, and other infrastructure necessary for private development. The first TIF district

(K-68) in Ottawa was developed in 2006 with the first project constructed in 2007-8. The second phase of the project plan for that district was approved in 2008 for a Travel Center to be located near I-35 and K-68, along with many other commercial business lots available for development. In November, the South 59 District was created; the first project anticipated for that district is for a Love's Travel Center just south of I-35 on Highway 59. Infrastructure construction will likely occur in 2009 and building construction is scheduled for 2010.

The City Planning Commission studied several topics this year, including electronic signs and wind generation. The special project for 2008 was a photo contest in October celebrating National Community Planning Month. We hope this becomes an annual event, so start taking photos now of favorite places, seasons and locations in Ottawa.

For additional information, please call 785-229-3620, or visit www.ottawaks.gov.





Governing Body Gene Ramsey, Mayor



2008-2009 Ottawa City Commission: Commissioner Blake Jorgensen, Commissioner Rocky Fleer, Mayor Gene Ramsey, Commissioner Linda Reed and Commissioner Sara Humm.

The City Commission is the legislative and policy-making body of the City of Ottawa. All meetings are held at City Hall, 101 S. Hickory.

Regular City Commission meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 pm, and on the third Wednesday at 9:30 am. The City Commission also meets on Monday afternoons at 4 pm for a work/study session. All meetings are open to the public.

Five commissioners are elected at-large by the citizens of Ottawa. The Mayor, chosen by the Commissioners each year, and serves as “the first, among equals.” The Mayor presides at Commission meetings, serves as spokesperson for the community, as an ambassador and defender of the community, and as a representative in intergovernmental relations.

The City Manager is hired by the City Commission to oversee the day-to-day operations of the City and serves as the CEO of the City. The Manager supervises all daily activities of the city and reviews and oversees the department operations.

Richard Nienstedt, City Manager, and City staff work to ensure that the City’s needs are met in an efficient and effective manner. In partnership with the department directors, the City Manager prepares a budget for the City Commission’s consideration; recruits, hires, disciplines, and supervises all of the organization’s employees; serves as the Commission’s chief adviser and carries out the Commission’s policies. Together, the Mayor, Commissioners and City Manager form a policy development and management team.

Human Resources Melissa Fairbanks, Director

The City of Ottawa believes our employees are our most valuable resource in providing services to citizens, property owners and visitors. The Human Resources Department provides the following services: recruitment; compensation and classification; personnel policy development and administration; employee evaluation procedures; regulatory compliance; employee benefits and activities; employee training; administrative projects; and various support services. The department also handles risk management functions including loss control, tort claims, safety and workers’ compensation.

In 2008, 15 vacancies were filled and 17 seasonal/summer workers were hired. Three employees retired from the City of Ottawa in 2008. Mechanic Merle Young retired in June after 20 years of service, Heavy Equipment Operator Randy Hughes retired in September after 31 years of service, and Custodian Betty Kirkland retired in October after 4 years of service. In conjunction with the League of Kansas Municipalities annual awards, the City Commission recognized 20 employees in November for their years of public service. These employees represented over 340 years of combined service to municipalities in Kansas.

A formal wellness program for employees was implemented in 2008. We recognize that healthy employees not only help reduce health care costs in our self-insured health plan, but can also help reduce workers’ compensation claims and costs. One hundred seventeen employees participated in the health screenings, which included a blood pressure check, body fat analysis, cholesterol and glucose screening, PSA tests for males over 40, and (optional) fitness testing. Twenty-two spouses and one retiree also participated. Many employees and spouses went on to participate in the wellness program. At the end of the first six-months, over 85 employees earned a health insurance premium reduction.

Ottawa is a member of the Kansas Eastern Regional Insurance Trust (KERIT), a workers’ compensation insurance pool. Due to the success of our safety culture, the City received a payment in 2008 of \$65,700, representing dividends earned in years 2000-2002. The City will also receive a 5% reduction in premiums for 2009 due to the insurance pool’s continued good performance.

**For additional information, please call 785-229-3634,
or visit www.ottawaks.gov.**