

Garden Plain offers programs For new residents and businesses

Garden Plain wants you

It's a simple statement, but community leaders in the city just minutes west of Wichita are putting a lot of time and effort into making their city appealing to both homeowners and business owners.

"A lot of people are moving for the small town lifestyle, where everybody knows everybody and they're looking out for each other," said Mayor Larry Lampe. "this is a jewel of a little community. It's close to Wichita and many jobs."

Garden Plain has a lot to offer for residents and businesses. The City is safe, with its own police department and concerned neighbors. The streets are clean and the schools are among the best in the state. There is available business space on Main Street.

To help entice people and business to Garden Plain, the city has a pair of programs to make the move easier.

City offers credits to homebuyers

Right now, the City of Garden Plain is offering utility credits to welcome new residents. The credits are available to purchasers of new homes, spec homes and existing homes.

For new homes and spec homes, a new owner can get a \$3,000 utility credit on a home valued at least \$100,000. The credit increases to \$4,500 for a home worth at least \$150,000, and it goes up to \$6,000 for homes valued at \$200,000 or more.

New owners of an existing home worth \$50,000 to \$99,999 can get a utility credit worth \$1,500. The credit increases to \$2,500 for a home worth at least \$100,000, and a home worth \$150,000 or more would earn a credit worth \$3,500.

The credit is good for water and sewer service.

City looks to expand business base with revitalization program

It took more than a year of work, but Garden Plain is offering a revitalization program for businesses and homes in the defined area. They hope it will result in a downtown with brighter, newer-looking buildings and new tenants in those buildings.

The program is basically a tax abatement plan. Owners must invest at least 10 percent of a property's appraised value. The owners then get a break from taxes on any increases in the value of the property. For example, the owner of a \$100,000 property would have to invest at least \$10,000 into the property.

The plan calls for a rebate of 95 percent for two years, 80 percent for two years, and 20 percent for one year. The application timetable can be established separately, but right now will run concurrent with the five-year program. The plan encompasses industrial, commercial and residential construction, which must begin within a year of the application.



New playground equipment was installed in City Park in June 2012. Donations from local organizations including the Garden Plain Chamber of Commerce were used with city funds to pay for the improvement. The city also won a grant for recycled tire mulch.

The city has easy access to U.S. Highway 54, and is just minutes from Wichita.

Already there is interest in downtown buildings, Mayor Lampe said.

A great place to live

Garden Plain offers a great small town lifestyle for its residents.

"It's a friendly, economical community with good school and churches," Lampe said. "Whether people are lifetime residents or new to the community, it doesn't take long before they're Garden Plain residents and people know them. That's always been the key."

This year, Garden Plain High School won its fourth consecutive Governor's Achievement Award. It's the only school to receive that kind of recognition in the award's five-year history. Only 18 high schools were honored this year, along with 43 elementary schools and 11 middle and junior high schools. Garden Plain students routinely score among the best in the state on standardized tests. The district also offers all-day kindergarten. St. Joseph Catholic School in nearby Ost was also honored with the Governor's Achievement Award.

This summer, Garden Plain installed new playground equipment at City Park. The equipment was purchased with city funds and donations from individuals,

civic organizations and grant money. The tennis courts were resurfaced in 2009.

The City of Garden Plain works closely with the Chamber of Commerce and other groups to enhance community life through special events and ongoing activities. The senior center, opened in 2002, gives older residents a gathering place to meet and maintain their active lifestyles. Other community groups include the Garden Plain Booster Club, Knights of Columbus, Boy Scouts, FCE, CYO and the Daughters of Isabella.

The Garden Plain Community also has a large and active recreational sports program.

Garden Plain is just minutes from easy shopping, including a new Kwick Shop Marketplace that opened this year and a new Walmart Supercenter slated to open in 2013. Residents actually have a shorter commute to these stores than most Wichita residents due to their nearest grocery stores.

Learn more

To find out more about Garden Plain and its new programs for residents and business, contact the City at 316-531-2321, or visit its brand new website at:

www.gardenplain.com



A large crowd (above) gathers for the parade at the annual Fourth of July celebration.