

## Midwest City goals outlined by mayor

BY CHRIS SCHUTZ

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MIDWEST CITY — Mayor Russell Smith told city leaders he is encouraged about Midwest City as it is now, and its outlook for the future.

Smith, who has been mayor for four years, spoke about the state of the city during a Midwest City Chamber of Commerce luncheon Thursday.

Because of sales tax income from an active retail center on 29th Street, the city is about \$55,000 under budget this year, Smith said. "I see no reason we would ever have to furlough anybody," he said.

The retail development, easily visible to drivers on Interstate 40, is "almost at full capacity," he said.

Further expansion of the city's sales tax revenue is a high priority, Smith told the chamber.

The city hopes to lure another large anchor retail store, theater complex, sporting goods store or bookstore, Smith said.

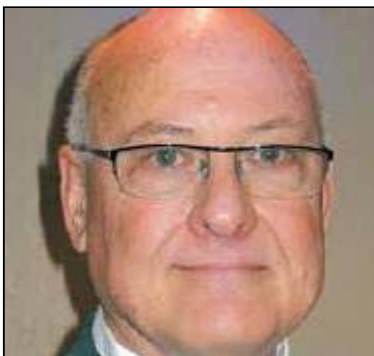
He encouraged people who buy items over the Internet to make sure the site registers a Midwest City address so Midwest City will get credit for Internet use tax revenue generated by the sale.

Smith estimated there are 500,000 to 600,000 square feet of available space for "redevelopment opportunities," including former Target, Walmart and Albertson's stores, along with Heritage Park Mall.

City officials are discussing methods of funding an upcoming \$25 million wastewater treatment plant renovation. Possibilities include a bond issue, repaid through ad valorem tax revenue; revenue bonds, repaid through a utility rate increase; or an increase of municipal sales tax, which is now 3.3 percent. Smith said he favors the sales tax option because visiting shoppers will help pay for the sewer plant improvements.

Smith cited a number of other goals for the city. They are:

- > Developing an industrial park at NE 23 and Air Depot Boulevard.
- > Creating a dog park.
- > Building new restrooms for the city's swimming complex.
- > Expanding the recycling center on SE 15.
- > Developing a 3 acre addition to Joe B. Barnes Regional Park.
- > Creating another park for the city, which he called "underparked."



Russell Smith  
Mayor of Midwest City