

URBAN LAND USE ELEMENT
SECTION I
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Fundamental Principle:

The fundamental principle for managing growth within the urban areas of Scott County is to produce a positive impact on the overall quality of life throughout the County and achieve a proper balance between the property rights of individuals and the rights and needs of the general public and community.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR GROWTH

Goal 1: Development is used to promote opportunities for a variety of cultures and income levels, resulting in a vibrant and interesting community.

Objective 1: Create a Form-Based Zoning category that can be used by developers who wish to mix land uses in return for superior and stringent design characteristics.

Goal 2: County and City leaders continue efforts on collaborative planning efforts with other communities in the region.

Objective 1: Planning and Zoning Staff should continue to have representation on the Bluegrass Area Development District's Regional Planning Committee

Objective 2: Planning and Zoning Staff should continue to represent the area at planning gatherings and conferences, and should present at such conferences to other planners when significant achievements are met.

Goal 3: The identity and integrity of the individual communities within Scott County and their respective opportunities for an enhanced quality of life are preserved and retain the "sense of place".

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Buffering and other effective forms of differentiation are used to help define adjacent neighborhoods.
- b. Preserve development and neighborhood aesthetics by including "pocket parks" and other types of open space within and between neighborhoods.

Goal 4: Cities within Scott County develop and maintain their individual characters, while the vitality of downtown Georgetown, Sadieville, and Stamping Ground are enhanced.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Review existing zoning ordinances and make adjustments that allow desired aesthetics to be developed for each city.

- b. Encourage municipalities to develop and maintain accessible inventories of their historically and culturally significant areas and buildings.

Goal 5: Opportunities for growth are supported in urban areas throughout the county.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. City and County governments actively cooperate to capitalize on or promote growth opportunities through collaborative efforts, e.g., regional infrastructure development projects, cooperative services delivery, interlocal agreements, etc.
- b. Infill development within USBs is encouraged while urban development outside of the USBs is discouraged.

Goal 6: Decision regarding sustainable growth are carefully coordinated with necessary public expenditures and revenue sources in order to provide for adequate public facilities and services, aid in capital budget planning processes, and ensure prudent and efficient use of public investments.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Each municipality is encouraged to develop policies and guidelines for reviewing and evaluating annexation opportunities and actions. Such policies and guidelines should, at a minimum, be based on the following four general criteria:
 - Consider Available Land –Decision-makers should also remain informed as to the quantity of land approved for future residential development within the existing city limits. In any case, land should be within the existing USB
 - Require Adequate Public Facilities – Growth should not exceed the ability of the city/county to provide services at acceptable levels of coverage. The effect of residential growth on school capacities should also be considered. Annexations should be timed to assure that acceptable levels of city/county services can be maintained.
- b. Develop an annexation policy that is consistent with development of capital budgets as outlined in the Community Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal 7: Review land use designations and update as needed on a routine basis.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Administratively rezone properties as needed to remove legal non-conforming uses, in alignment with the Future Land Use map.
- b. Work to assure consistency between the various decision-making criteria.
- c. Update the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations to bring them in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR URBAN FORM

Residential Districts

- 1. A variety of housing types and densities are encouraged throughout urban areas for all income levels.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Land Use Patterns: Municipalities should encourage a variety of housing types and densities, including mixed-use developments that are well-served by potential public

transportation and close to employment centers, services, and amenities. Higher-density housing should be placed near shopping and work centers, and in designated neighborhoods and districts.

- b. Housing Supply: Municipalities should encourage public and private, for-profit and non-profit sectors to develop and maintain an adequate supply of single and multiple family housing.
2. Municipalities should encourage creation and expansion of affordable housing opportunities and preservation of existing housing stock.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Housing Information: Municipalities should collect, maintain, and disseminate information and vital statistics on housing affordability such as cost demand and supply of housing stock.
- b. Development Practices: Scott County municipalities will seek opportunities to develop and modify land use regulations and permit processes that make project approval timelines achievable, and densities and mitigation costs more predictable.
- c. Preservation of Neighborhoods: Scott County municipalities will work toward retaining existing affordable housing stock through conservation efforts of older residential neighborhoods.
- d. Impact of New Policies and Regulations: Municipalities will assess the effects of new polices and regulations, on housing development costs, and overall housing affordability.
- e. Historic Residences: Scott County and its cities and towns will explore opportunities to combine development efforts with historic preservation, placing priority on preserving existing residential structures of historic value. A Historical District Ordinance should be adopted to support preservation efforts.

Commercial Districts

1. The size and scale of business within Commercial Districts varies with new development and redevelopment including a mix of uses and avoiding large, single-use buildings, and dominating parking areas.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. New Development: New development in Commercial Districts will be encouraged to locate and design buildings such that a percentage of building fronts directly face adjacent streets, provide a mix of types and sizes of businesses, provide pedestrian-oriented site design, and incorporate convenient, safe and attractive parking areas into the block.
- b. Commercial District Design: The design of Commercial Districts should provide for convenient access, efficient and cost effective pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and comfortable pedestrian environment in selected nodes.
- c. Existing Strip Commercial Corridor Development: Municipalities ~~will~~ **should** encourage and support the gradual evolution of existing auto-dominated strip commercial areas to compact multi-modal-oriented mixed-use places with enhanced walking connections between destinations.
- d. Pedestrian Access: Pedestrian environment within Commercial Districts will be supported by connecting them to adjoining uses. Buildings should be oriented both to public streets and to internal streets, with parking areas located internally on the property, or behind the building when possible.

- e. Commercial District Access: All future Commercial District developments should consider accessibility for all modes of transportation.
- f. Arterial Crossings: Improve pedestrian/bicycle linkages across arterial streets and along commercial corridors. Pedestrian travel routes should be clearly identified and distinguished from motorized vehicle traffic through parking areas, streets, and along building frontages.
- f. Linking Neighborhoods with Adjacent Commercial Districts: New models for retail development will be necessary to combine the needs of “walkable” neighborhoods with large-scale retail centers. Pedestrian and bicycle linkages from surrounding neighborhoods to Commercial Districts will be strengthened. Pedestrian access will be provided from nearby residential neighborhoods to the Commercial Districts from multiple directions. Walkways will be aesthetically pleasing, safe, and convenient to the extent practicable.
- g. Parking Improvements: Land devoted to surface parking lots in existing developed areas should be reduced to the extent possible. Pedestrian/bicycle linkages through existing parking lots to commercial destinations should be improved as opportunities arise.

Community Appearance and Design

1. Each addition to the street system will be designed with due consideration given to the visual character and experience of the citizens who will use the street system and adjacent property. Together, the layout of the street network and the streets themselves will contribute to the character, form, and scale of the city in which they are located.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Street Design Standards: All new public streets must conform to the accepted street standards. Connectivity of the street system is encouraged. Alternative street designs may be approved by municipalities where they are needed to accommodate unique situations, such as important landscape features or necessary safety, accessibility and maintenance requirements.
- b. Street Layout: New streets will make development an integrated extension of the community. The street pattern will be simple, interconnected, and direct, and avoid circuitous routes. Multiple routes should be provided between key destinations. Streets should be located to consider physical features and create views and prominent locations for civic landmarks such as parks, squares, and schools.
- c. Street Tree Design: Street trees should be used in a formal architectural fashion to reinforce, define, and connect the space and corridors created by buildings and other features along the street. Canopy shade trees will constitute the majority of tree plantings, and a mixture of tree types will be included, arranged to establish partial urban tree canopy cover. Existing trees will be preserved to the maximum extent feasible.
- d. Street Lighting: Lighting fixture design and illumination should be tailored to match the context of the street. Lighting levels should be designed to emphasize the desired effect and not the light source, avoiding sharp contrast between bright spots and shadows, and spillover glare.
 - i. The City should explore new design options for the type of fixtures available for use within any street condition, which enhance the street environment by establishing a consistent style with height, design color and finishes.

- ii. Residential street light fixtures will be designed for human, pedestrian scale while providing an adequate level of illumination for safety.
 - iii. Where higher pedestrian activity occurs, such as associated with neighborhood or community centers, a combination of lighting options should be considered – such as exists in the Downtown with high mount fixtures for broad distribution of light within the street, and with smaller pedestrian-oriented fixtures along the sidewalk corridors.
- e. Civic Buildings and Grounds: Civic and government facilities should be placed in central locations as highly visible focal points. The urban design and architectural quality should express permanence, importance and respect for broad citizen preferences and community identity. Major public buildings should have a civic presence enhanced by their height, mass and materials. In addition, public buildings should:
- i. Be accessible by motorized vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.
 - ii. Be integrated into a setting that includes generous landscaping and/or public outdoor spaces.
- f. Public Space Design: Public spaces, such as plazas, civic buildings, outdoor spaces, parks and gateway landscapes, should be designated to be functional, accessible, attractive, and comfortable.
- g. Entryways: Community entryways will be enhanced and accentuated at key entry points including interstate interchange areas, and other major arterial streets leading into the city.
- h. Modification of Standardized Commercial Architecture: Commercial buildings will demonstrate a reflection of local values with site-specific design. Standardized architectural prototypes will be modified, if necessary, so that the City’s appearance remains unique. Development will not consist solely of repetitive design that may be found in other communities.
- j. Compatibility with Surrounding Development: Proposed commercial buildings must contribute to the positive character of the area. Building materials, architectural details, color range, building massing and relationships to street and sidewalks will contribute to a distinctive local district corridor, or neighborhood.
- k. Crime Prevention and Security: Security and crime prevention will continue to be important factors in urban design. Considerations such as natural barriers and visibility should be incorporated into future developments. Anonymous environments, hidden areas, difficult access, etc. will be addressed and avoided.
- l. Lighting and Landscaping: Security lighting should generally be at low, even levels to create comfortable area-wide visibility and not highly contrasting bright spots and shadows.
- m. Role of Municipalities: Municipalities should sustain city-owned facilities and city-initiated programming, and assist local arts organizations by providing administrative consultation, marketing expertise, technical assistance, and box office services.
- n. Types of Projects: The City should provide, maintain, and operate historic and cultural facilities. A full range of performing, historical, and visual arts programs will be produced and presented.

Employment Districts

1. Employment Districts should be created as locations for basic employment. Such Districts should be major employment centers in the community.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Creation of an Employment District overlay ordinance.
- b. A mix of uses should be allowed in such an overlay ordinance allowing light industry, office, and commercial uses to be served by complementary residential uses.
- c. Such an overlay ordinance should encourage non-motorized transportation options and take into account any future transit or light rail development.
- d. Such an overlay ordinance should mandate design standards to ensure excellence of design of the development. Such developments should form an attractive business park setting with a clear unifying network of streets and sidewalks, or a system of campus-like outdoor space with connecting walkway spines. Recreation, parks, and open space areas should be incorporated into the design, as well as pedestrian linkages to city trails.
- e. Such an overlay ordinance should mandate that all structures within such a development meet LEED certification standards.
- f. Transitional Land Uses: A transition of lower intensity land uses should be provided at the edges of Employment Districts, in areas adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Land use boundaries should be placed at mid-block locations rather than along streets, so that buildings facing each other are compatible and transitions between uses are gradual.
- e. “Walkable Destinations”: Secondary and supporting uses in an Employment District will be accessible to and located within easy walking distance of major employment concentrations.
- f. District Seams: A District will not evolve in isolation from the surrounding community. The seam between a District and the larger community may consist of a boundary of natural features or landscaped grounds, but with connection to adjacent neighborhoods, which can be shared with adjoining areas, such as day care, outdoor spaces, and convenience shopping centers.
- g. Redevelopment/Infill: There will be future infill and redevelopment of existing employment centers. As non-compatible businesses vacate, new development planned for Employment Districts should be designed to complement the character of the surrounding area.

Industrial Districts

1. Industrial development should take place in dedicated Industrial Districts. Such places should allow for a wide range of industrial and commercial uses that do not need or are not suited to high public visibility.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Land Uses: Industrial land uses such as manufacturing, assembly plants, primary metal and related industries, vehicle-related commercial uses such as auto repair, maintenance and storage, other types of commercial operations warehouses, outdoor storage yards, and distribution facilities are appropriate for an Industrial District. Industrial Districts should include a variety of flexible sites for small local, and startup business and industry, as well as large national or regional enterprises. Generally, the characteristics that differentiate an Industrial District from an Employment District are:
 - i. Relatively smaller workforces than Employment Districts
 - ii. Emphasis on commercial truck or rail traffic
 - iii. Characteristics such as outdoor work and storage areas.

- b. Supporting Uses: Supporting uses, such as restaurants, day care, convenience retail, services, and housing, will be located internally or immediately adjacent to and within walking distance of Industrial Districts.
- c. Land Use Transition: Lower intensity land uses that can help form a transition between an Industrial District and adjacent districts and residential neighborhoods should be located at the edges of the district. Certain types of supporting uses could help achieve this transition.
- d. Design Character and Image: Building and site improvements in Industrial Districts may be simple, practical, and more vehicle-oriented than in other districts and may lack a uniform design theme or character. Development standards should allow for metal buildings, tilt-up buildings, and similar large span construction and aprons of pavement for work and storage. Parking lots and outside storage will be screened from streets and other public spaces with fencing and/or landscaping. Outdoor spaces and amenities for pedestrians may be relatively simple to meet the practical needs of workers. However, perimeter streetscape design standards will be consistent with other parts of the community.
- e. Transportation Improvements: Transportation improvements should support the efficient movement of commercial truck traffic from Industrial Districts to the arterial street system via an internal connector (or collector) street system. Transportation improvements may include rail access in some districts.

Infill/Redevelopment

- 1. Infill: Vacant and underdeveloped land in the Urban Service Boundaries is developed or redeveloped in a manner that is compatible with viable existing development and the long term character and goals for the area.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Develop and adopt a Transfer of Development Rights ordinance that targets specific infill areas as receiving zones and develop design guidelines that encourage quality urban development.
- b. Develop policies and recommendations to encourage compatible infill development for single-family detached and attached housing, multiple family housing, live/work housing, neighborhood retail, and office and industrial uses. Identify ways to provide parks/open space, and recreation opportunities.
- c. Develop programs for eliminating blight and encourage redevelopment.

Sustainable Development:

Goal:

The Planning Commission shall develop policies and administer regulations that encourage sustainable development

Objective 1. Review and update Subdivision and Development Regulations to allow and encourage flexible design techniques such as modified cul-de-sac, street and parking lot design, green roofs and other strategies to reduce impervious surface and provide for natural stormwater absorption.

Objective 2. Modify local building codes to require new construction to meet most recent

residential model energy code/ordinance such as the International Energy Conservation Code.

Objective 3. Explore the possibility of allowing density or tax rebates to encourage the location of new LEED project development in areas with existing infrastructure inside the USB.

Objective 4. Explore the possibility of allowing density credits or tax abatements to projects that meet all the prerequisites for LEED Neighborhood Development.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR OPEN SPACE

1. Open space within Scott County is protected in order to provide habitat essential to the conservation of plants, animals, and their associated ecosystems for the general benefit of the citizens.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. **Open Space System:** Municipalities within Scott County will have a system of publicly-owned open space to protect the integrity of wildlife habitat and conservation sites, protect corridors between natural areas, preserve outstanding examples of their diverse natural heritage, and provide a broad range of opportunities for educational, interpretive, and recreational programs to meet community needs.
- b. **Urban Development:** Municipalities within Scott County conserve and integrate open lands into the developed landscape by directing development away from natural habitats and features and by using innovative planning design and management practices. When it is not possible to direct development away from natural habitats and features, they should be integrated into the developed landscape in a manner that conserves their integrity.
- c. **Public Programs:** To promote understanding and enjoyment of local and regional open lands, formal and non-formal education, and interpretive programs are encouraged through appropriate opportunities.
- d. **Partnerships:** To promote the development of effective local and regional partnerships with other governmental organizations and private sector for the protection and preservation of locally and regionally valued open spaces. It will also seek the cooperation and assistance of citizens, business, community groups, conservation organizations, and governmental agencies in the development and implementation of programs to protect and preserve local and regional open space.
- e. **Open Space Plan:** The City and County will develop and maintain an open space plan on local and regional open lands to aid the City and the public in decisions about development around these areas, including management of publicly-owned lands.
- f. **Land Acquisition and Management:** Promote the acquisition and management of land and water to preserve, protect, and enhance natural areas.
- g. **Internal Departmental and Agency Coordination:** The City and County will coordinate open space programs within Scott County to maximize public benefit and explore ways of integrating open space protection into ongoing programs.
- h. **Ecosystems Management:** The City and County will manage, maintain and enhance public open space and natural areas to ensure the ongoing conservation of plants and animals in need of protection and their associated ecosystems, to control the invasion and spread of undesirable non-native plants, improve aesthetics, and provide opportunities for appropriate public use.

- i. Conflicts: The City and County will manage conflicts between people and natural areas through site design, public information and education, habitat manipulation, and plant and animal population management techniques.
- j. Public Involvement: The City and County will involve citizens in planning the management of public open spaces.
- k. Funding: The City and County will seek alternative funding sources to implement open lands policies and programs, including private, State, and Federal grants and donations of money, property and in-kind services.
- l. Access: The City and County will design trail routes in open lands to enhance access to recreation while minimizing ecological impacts. Determination of type of trail or suitability for access will be made dependent on potential ecological impacts and recreation needs. Special attention will be given to environmentally sensitive trail design, location, and construction.

2. Open Space is used as a primary tool to provide the County and its incorporated areas with a well defined edge, establish community separators, direct growth, and preserve rural character.

Supporting Objectives:

- a. Conservation Tools: Promote the purchase of open space, conservation easements, and/or development rights and use other tools such as development regulations and planning for the purpose of defining and protecting community edges.
- b. Access: Cities within Scott County will ensure that development provides and maintains access to public open space areas, where appropriate.
- c. Community Buffer: Strategic open lands that serve as community separators outside the Urban Service Boundary will be identified for either public ownership or other land conservation measures.
- d. Coordination: The City and County will actively work with local, regional, State and Federal agencies, as well as private entities, to acquire large tracts of key open space in the region.

3. A variety of recreational opportunities is provided to the community through a diverse and interconnected framework of open space including parks, trails, and natural areas.

Supporting Objectives:

- 1. Corridors: Trails along streams and drainageways should be dispersed throughout the County, provide public access and link neighborhoods, parks, activity centers, commercial centers, and streets where compatible with natural habitat values utilizing environmentally sensitive trail design techniques.
- 2. Urban Public Space: Small pocket parks, public plazas, and sidewalk gathering places should include “street furniture” such as benches and be incorporated into urban design for Downtown Districts, Small Area Plans, and Residential Districts throughout the County.
- 3. Community Horticulture: Cities will encourage and support the establishment of community vegetable gardens, ornamental gardens, and other horticultural projects to provide food, beautification, education and other social benefits.
- 4. Legacy Trail expansion: Cities and the County will encourage and support the efforts to extend the Legacy Trail from its trailhead at the Horse Park into Georgetown.

Annexation Policy

In order to provide an environment conducive to successful urban development, no development within Urban Service Boundaries should be approved except upon the condition of annexation. Annexation should not be approved unless it is determined that services can be provided. Such analysis may be done by Planning and Zoning staff if requested. In no case should any existing USB be expanded during the current planning period. The determination of annexation feasibility should be decided via a system that accurately assesses the true cost of proposed developments upon local government services within the county.

New Development:

- a. New development is required to contribute any additional public facilities within or adjacent to the development that are needed to serve that development and are consistent with policy on proportionality, with appropriate exceptions consistent with the other goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- b. Reductions or elimination of contributions or fees in infill incentive districts are allowed.
- c. Appropriate development fees shall be calculated and collected, and the benefits of modifying studied.

Infrastructure Improvements:

As the Northwest Bypass is completed, future development should be considered and directed as shown on the Future Land Use Map.

Highway Buffering Standards:

The following policies should be included as standards in the *Zoning Ordinance* and *Subdivision and Development Regulations*.

1. Residential development along the bypass and I-75 should be screened for both visual and acoustic purposes. Screening should substantially soften visual and noise impacts upon adjacent uses, especially residential. It is recognized that buffer screening cannot completely eliminate visual and noise impacts.
2. Setback requirements should be established based upon the use, but no less than 100 feet along the bypass and I-75. Intensive uses will require greater setbacks due to potential noise impacts. Similar setback requirements (100 ft.) should also apply to ramps along the interchanges and major intersections.

