

INTRODUCTION

In developing this Comprehensive Plan, goals and objectives for land use were established. These goals and objectives are of little value, however, unless steps are taken to implement them. Planning is a continuous process, needing constant updating and refinement as conditions change. This plan is intended to cover a five-to ten-year period, while looking further ahead where possible. During the next five years the plan is intended to serve as a guide for public and private decisions. The comprehensive plan is required to be readopted every five years. A thorough evaluation should be conducted prior to re-adoption to determine if the plan or components of it need to be updated for the next planning period.

The existence of this plan does not preclude a thorough examination of each recommended project or regulatory approach as it is developed to consider whether it continues to be in accordance with the planning program. Nor does the existence of the plan preclude changes to the goals, objectives, or standards in the document itself as long as the public review and approval process set out in KRS Chapter 100 is followed. A number of means are available to assist in the implementation of the plan.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

The public officials of the cities of Shelbyville and Simpsonville and Shelby County bear the primary responsibility for its implementation. It is important that public officials understand, support, and adopt the development policies. In addition, it is important that public and private agencies form partnerships to implement the plan. As the decision makers, the Shelbyville City Council, Simpsonville City Commission, Shelby County Fiscal Court and the Triple S Planning Commission have the powers necessary to adopt policies that help fulfill the goals and objectives. These bodies should maintain a close relationship with the regional planning council (KIPDA) and the planning commissions of surrounding cities and counties so that the planning process is properly coordinated. Because of their statutory role in planning and development review, the planning commission and its staff possess special expertise as well as an overview of development issues and needs within the community. If properly utilized by local elected officials, the planning commission is very well positioned to act both as policy advisor and enforcer of local development policies. In addition, the public should be kept informed of community development plans to solicit input and support for the program.

In addition, other local agencies contribute to implementation of the comprehensive plan through the development and implementation of their own plans.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The subdivision of land is the initial step in the process of building a community. Subdivision regulations are locally adopted regulations that serve to govern the conversion of raw land into building sites. The quality of subdivisions and the standards that are built into them determine the overall form and character of a community. Once land has been divided into blocks and lots, streets built, and utilities installed, a development pattern is permanently established and unlikely to be changed. For generations to come, the entire community and the individuals who live in the subdivision will be influenced by the quality and character of the subdivision design. Therefore, subdivision regulations applied in advance of development provide a community with its only opportunity to ensure that its new neighborhoods are properly designed and that they enhance the quality of life for residents.

Subdivision regulations play a crucial role in establishing development standards for new development. Good standards help assure effective traffic patterns, adequate streets, adequate water pressure for domestic use and firefighting capacity, adequate provision of wastewater treatment, storm water drainage, appropriate spacing

between buildings and between streets and buildings, adequate recreational facilities, and an aesthetically pleasing environment.

It is recommended that the subdivision regulations be updated after final adoption of the comprehensive plan. The last major update to the subdivision regulations occurred in 1995. In addition, it is important that the planning commission uniformly and regularly enforce these regulations. Without enforcement, the regulations have no merit and begin to lose meaning as precedents of non-conformance are established. In addition to regular enforcement, it is also recommended that subdivision and site improvements be inspected regularly in order to ensure that all improvements are being installed in accordance with the subdivision regulations and approved plans.

ZONING REGULATIONS

The zoning ordinance is considered to be one of the principal tools for implementing the land use plan. Zoning generally divides the community into exclusive use districts (agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial) specifying the particular uses that will be allowed in each district. Standards are then set for each district. For example, these standards regulate permitted uses, density of population and structures, lot sizes, percent coverage of lots by buildings, building setbacks and off-street parking. The theory behind separation of uses through zoning is the protection of property values by preventing incompatible uses from locating next to one another.

Alternate approaches to strict use separation are also available. Performance standards may be developed to regulate permissible impacts of each land use on neighboring uses and on community services. In theory this would allow any mix of land uses within an area as long as negative impacts on neighboring uses could be controlled. Some of the methods that could be required to control potentially negative impacts could include buffering along property boundaries, special sound proofing of structures and altering traffic patterns on site.

A combination of the above approaches is also possible. Such an approach could include a separation of uses into broad categories, such as residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural. Within these broad categories, standards could be provided to determine the appropriate type or density of development based on site factors (for example, soils, slope, and drainage characteristics), compatibility with neighboring uses, and availability of needed services (for example, road capacity, availability of central water or sewer, and school capacity).

Upon final adoption of the comprehensive plan, it is recommended that the zoning regulations and zoning maps be updated. The zoning regulations need a comprehensive review as portions are outdated and modifications are needed to implement the comprehensive plan. It is also recommended that the zoning map be updated with changes based on updates to the zoning regulations and more specifically the zoning classifications.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

An important element of any zoning or development regulation is development plan review. While zoning specifies permitted uses of land, development plan review is the means by which the quality of new development is protected through evaluation of the proposed layout and design. It is also the means by which potentially negative impacts on neighboring uses are controlled. Where more intense uses abut less intense uses, for example a neighborhood shopping center next to a residential area, development plan review is the appropriate tool to evaluate potential noise and traffic impacts. The importance of a professional review of development plans should therefore not be underestimated. It is recommended that the Planning Commission review their current development plan review procedures to determine if additional coordination with other

agencies is warranted and to consider hiring or contracting with an engineering firm to review plats, improvement plans, and development plans.

CODE ENFORCEMENT

Codes are governmental requirements placed on private uses of land to protect the occupants from the hazards of living and working in unsound, unhealthy, or otherwise dangerous structures or conditions. Building, plumbing, electrical and fire codes provide minimum standards for the construction of both new buildings and alteration of existing structures. The housing code provides that existing dwellings must be maintained in a safe and sanitary manner. Structures that are considered unfit for human habitation may be condemned and removed. Other regulations, such as health department regulations, provide minimum standards for on-site septic installations.

These codes apply to the community as a whole and are uniform in nature. In some cases the local government may establish its own standards, or the state may dictate a uniform or minimum set of standards for the commonwealth. In order for these codes to be useful an inspection system must be maintained with qualified inspectors enforcing the regulations in the code. Inspectors may be employed by the state to staff district offices or may be locally hired to enforce local codes. At the present time, code enforcement for new construction seems adequate. However, it is recommended that the planning commission review procedures and specifications for subdivision improvement inspection to insure uniform compliance with requirements. In addition, the Shelby County Fiscal Court and Simpsonville City Commission may want to consider the adoption of a property maintenance code to address dilapidated structures and littered lots similar to the one adopted by the City of Shelbyville.

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

The development of many of the recommended highway improvements in Shelby County is dependent primarily on the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Department of Highways. However, much responsibility rests on the local units of government. Local agencies must work among themselves and with the Department of Highways to resolve differences with respect to location and features of particular road improvements. Local groups must actively support highway improvements in their areas. They must also be prepared, when required, to provide rights-of-way, for example. The planning commission has the responsibility of helping to maintain the traffic-carrying capacity of major streets and roads by developing good local land use planning practices, subdivision regulations, and zoning regulations.

Roads not maintained by the State Department of Highways are maintained by the fiscal court or the cities. The responsibility for making improvements to these roads also rests with local agencies. It is important that a systematic method of inventorying conditions on these roads and scheduling needed maintenance and improvements be established in the form of county and city road management plans. Scheduling should be based on established criteria, such as volume of traffic, severity of need, and the like. In addition, the plan should be integrated into a multi-year capital improvements program for the cities and county. It is recommended that the cities and county inventory existing roads and establish a long term maintenance and improvement plan for city and county maintained roadways.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM AND CAPITAL BUDGET

The capital improvements budget is a method used by governmental units for scheduling the financing of a part of the public improvements program which can be realized during a definite period of time, normally five to six

years, on a systematic basis. This budget contains detailed improvement proposals including cost estimates. It should also be carefully coordinated with the financial resources and debt service structures of the community.

The first year of a capital budget should be adopted by the governing body as a part of its annual budget. The capital budget should be reviewed annually and extended for one year with the first year being adopted as the current annual budget.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Community acceptance and cooperation is essential to the success of a comprehensive plan. The ideas and support of local civic clubs, neighborhoods groups and community clubs, private citizens, business and industrial leaders are needed to implement a successful community improvement project. A large part of achieving successful citizen participation is through a public education program designed to permit a two way flow of information between the citizens and the planning commission, cities, and county. Experience has shown that such a public information program provides a valuable sounding board from which valid suggestions and criticisms usually result.

As development policies, ordinances, regulations are revised it is recommended that various public workshops be held to obtain meaningful input into the planning process. In addition, it is recommended that the planning commission continue to maintain a website to facilitate public access to planning documents, applications, agendas, etc. Allowing the public access to forms and other documents also reduces the amount of time that planning staff spends answering general information questions.

LAND ACQUISITION

One means of implementing a comprehensive plan is the acquisition of rights in land. This may involve advance acquisition or options on land for use in the future, or acquisition of easements for use of certain features of land. Advance acquisition and options are presently most commonly used for industrial sites, but may also be used for future roads, school sites, parks and prime farmlands. Easements are commonly used for utilities and roads, but can also be used to preserve scenic features, prevent use of floodways, and other purposes.

STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

State and federal grants and loans can be important sources of financing for public improvements projects, which can be difficult for a small town or county to undertake financially. A number of funding sources exist, although the trend is toward assembly of a financing package from multiple sources, including evidence of a substantial local commitment. It is important to be aware of possible funding sources and conditions of funding. Examples of current grant funding programs are Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnership Program (HOME), Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund (Fund B), Transportation Alternatives (TAP), formerly Enhancements (MAP-21), Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Area Development Fund (ADF), Brownfields Funding, etc.