

CHAPTER NINE

In developing this Comprehensive Plan, goals for land use in the City of Alexandria were established and recommendations made for their attainment. The recommendations 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, after which time a thorough re-evaluation should be made to determine its applicability for the next five years.

The existence of this plan, however, 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, through the public review process set out in KRS Chapter 100, where changed conditions warrant. As described in the following pages, a number of means are available to assist in the implementation of the plan.

LOCAL LEADERSHIP

The public officials of Alexandria bear the primary responsibility for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. It is important that public officials understand, accept, and adopt the development policies and that public and private agencies understand and support the plan. As the decision makers, the Alexandria City Council and Planning Commission have the power that is necessary to adopt policies and fulfill the goals of the city. These bodies should maintain a close relationship with the Campbell County Planning Commission and the planning commissions of surrounding cities 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 and insight into the development patterns and needs within the city. 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.



Implementation

In order to effectively and efficiently implement the policies and recommendations contained in the Comprehensive Plan, the planning commission in conjunction with the city council should consider hiring full or part time planning personnel. This person should serve as liaison to the city council and other planning entities in the county in order to better coordinate growth and development policies within the city and Campbell County on a on-going basis. In addition, staff should be responsible for daily administration of the planning program by issuing permits, coordinating inspection of improvements and enforcement activities, as well as providing the planning commission with staff reports for development proposals in the city. Having a person on staff would streamline the application process, increase consistency in permitting and review of development proposals, and assist the planning commission to provide ongoing, efficient service to citizens of Alexandria.

ADDITIONAL STUDIES

Prior to updating the Alexandria's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, city officials should also consider conducting additional studies for the Old Town District in order to develop more specific design standards and participate in the Renaissance Kentucky Program for funding of improvements in this area. In addition, another study should be conducted to determine the feasibility of redeveloping the U.S. 27 corridor prior to additional improvements and realignment of this roadway in order to:

- facilitate clustering of commercial uses
- eliminate numerous access points
- create a more aesthetically pleasing entrance corridor to the city
- increase opportunities for multi-modal transportation
- improve linkages to recreational and residential areas.

In conjunction with the Campbell County Transportation and Recreational Planning Processes, the city should work with the county in order to identify open space/recreational areas, pedestrian and bikeways, and methods of creating multi-modal linkages between recreational areas.

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 the subdivisions and the standards that are built into them determine the form and character of a community. Once land has been divided into blocks and lots, streets built, and utilities are installed, a development pattern is permanently established and unlikely to be changed. For generations the entire community and the individuals who live in the subdivision will be influenced by the quality and character of 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.

Subdivision regulations play a crucial role in establishing standards for new development. Good standards help assure effective traffic patterns, adequate streets, adequate water pressure for domestic use and fire fighting capacity, adequate provision for sewerage, 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 reviewed and updated as necessary after final adoption of the comprehensive plan. Several areas that should be reviewed and modified are more stringent access management requirements and integration of (or reference to) the new storm water management standards administered by Sanitation District No. 1. In addition, subdivision regulations should also address minimum standards for the creation of open space, greenway corridors and the inclusion of bike paths, walking trails and sidewalks in all developments, especially where indicated on Figure 6-4 of this plan. Updates to the subdivision regulations, approved since the last printing (i.e. conservation subdivision standards), should also be integrated into the existing document.



Implementation

ZONING

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 which regulate uses permitted, density of population and structures, lot sizes, percent of lots coverage by buildings, building setbacks and off-street parking. The theory behind separation of uses through zoning is that of protecting property values by preventing incompatible uses from locating next to one another. Zoning implements the land use plan because the use districts are based upon the land development policies established in Chapter 8 of the plan. 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 and lighting 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, the zoning ordinance should be reviewed and updated as necessary to implement the comprehensive plan. In addition to incorporating changes (Conservation Subdivisions, Planned Unit Development, etc.) that have occurred since the last printing of the document, the planning commission should review standards for the development of industrial uses and modify current regulations concerning sexually oriented businesses in order to be consistent with the findings and recommendations contained in the study conducted by Duncan and Associates for Kenton and Campbell Counties.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

An important element of regulating any land use is site plan review. While zoning specifies permitted uses of land, site 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, site plan review is the appropriate tool to evaluate potential noise and traffic impacts. The importance of a professional review of site plans should therefore not be underestimated.

It is recommended that the Planning Commission review their current site plan review procedures to determine if additional coordination with other agencies is warranted or if formulation of a site plan review committee could streamline the current review and approval process. In addition, the planning commission should consider the implementation of, or amendment to, existing policies to efficiently coordinate the storm water review process with Sanitation District No. 1.

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 the 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.



Implementation

At the present time, code enforcement for new construction seems adequate. However, it is recommended that the planning commission review procedures to address violations of the zoning ordinance and inspection of subdivision improvements in order to insure uniform enforcement and compliance with existing regulations. In addition, the city council may want to consider the adoption of a property maintenance code.

ROAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

The development of recommended highway improvements in Campbell 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 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. Local groups also have the responsibility of helping to maintain the traffic-carrying capacity of major streets and roads by developing appropriate land use planning practices, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinances. 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, etc. In addition, the plan should be integrated into a multi-year capital improvements program for the county and cities.

At the present time, a systematic road management plan is not in effect for Alexandria as the city has committed its resources to improve Viewpoint Drive over the next several years. Once this project is complete, the City of Alexandria may want to consider a adopting a more formal capital improvements program as well as continue to commit increasing resources to street maintenance as the city continues to develop. In addition, the city should also work with Campbell County to coordinate multi-modal transportation initiatives and schedule improvements to county streets immediately adjacent to the city which are undersized, unpaved and in very poor condition.

PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM AND CAPITAL BUDGET

The capital improvements budget is a method used by governmental units for scheduling the financing of a public improvements program which can be realized during a definite period of time, normally 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. Such a program could assist the city to proactively plan for street improvements, redevelopment in the Old Town District and U.S. 27 corridor, and the creation of a community-wide pedestrian/bikeway system.

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, county, and cities. 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 develop a link to the city's website to facilitate public access to planning documents such as the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, Forms and Applications, planning commission schedule and meeting minutes, etc. Allowing the public access to forms and other documents would effectively reduce the amount of time that city personnel spend answering general information questions about the city's planning program.



Implementation

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, and park lands. Easements are commonly used for utilities and roads, but can also be used to preserve scenic features, establish pedestrian/bike ways, prevent use of floodways, and other purposes.

STATE AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

State and federal grants or loans can be important sources of financing for public improvement 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.

It is recommended that the City of Alexandria consider participation in the Renaissance Kentucky Program in order to obtain funding for improvements (building renovation, parking, underground utilities, etc.) to Old Town and for redevelopment of the U.S. 27 corridor (access management, streetscape improvements, development of walk/bike ways, etc.).