

CHAPTER EIGHT

INTRODUCTION

The land use plan is a guide for the physical development of the City of London and unincorporated areas within Laurel County. It is based upon goals outlined during the preparation of the plan and policy recommendations developed to achieve them. The goals and objectives establish a vision of the city and county and should be representative of how citizens and governing officials would like life in Laurel County to be in the future. It is the duty of the planning commission, governing bodies and citizens to edit, refine, adopt, enlarge and alter these previously stated goals in order to develop policy recommendations for future development. Policy recommendations are included in this chapter as development and growth guidelines. They represent procedures to be followed if Laurel County is to develop in accordance with the stated goals.

The land use plan is presented as one of the final chapters of the comprehensive plan because it utilizes the findings and recommendations of all of the preceding chapters. Specific application of the guidelines to new development in the city and county will occur through zoning regulations, map amendments, subdivision regulations and through the day to day development decisions of the planning commission and legislative bodies.

The process of developing land use policy guidelines includes an analysis of present land use patterns, assessment of the problems associated with these land use trends, and recommendations for future land use. A general evaluation of existing land use patterns is discussed first and is based upon generalized existing land use maps prepared during the planning process. Next, future land use maps for the City of London and Laurel County are presented along with policy recommendations to guide future land use decisions. The future land use maps must be used in conjunction with the text of the comprehensive plan when considering zoning map amendments and development proposals or the establishment of zoning regulations in the unincorporated areas of Laurel County. The goals and objectives, develop-

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ment policies stated in the plan as well as background information such as environmental data should be considered on a site by site basis. Although land use data are reported relative to political boundaries, land use trends do not respect such boundaries. Land use activities occurring at the edge of the city limits influence the demand for similar activities on the opposite side of the boundary in the unincorporated areas.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

The following land use categories are used in the discussion of existing and future land uses. These land use categories are broader than specific zoning districts and are not intended to replicate the specific zones. Zoning regulations will be specific in the uses allowed and may contain several zones for a single land use. As zoning regulations are specific to the particular jurisdiction, the allowed uses and requirements will vary between communities although the name of the zone is similar or the same.

RESIDENTIAL LAND USES - Existing residential land uses are grouped into two categories: low density and high density. Low density residential includes single family residences including mobile homes on single lots of five acres or less. Due to lack of zoning in the county, there may be more than one single family structure on a lot. This category may also include small concentrations of duplexes. High density residential includes large duplex developments, townhouses, multi-family units and mobile home parks.

Large residential lots of five acres or more which may be associated with agricultural operations are accounted for under agricultural and open space land uses. Large lot rural estate developments may be included as agricultural/open space if the lots are more than five acres. It is not the intention of this plan to automatically allow development to occur at the upper end of density ranges in consideration of future residential development. Rather, the density of development should be determined by the residential development policies contained in the future land use section of this plan. The land use categories used in this plan are purposefully broad. The appropriate density for a specific development must be consistent with the planning commission's

goals and objectives, residential development policies, site specific environmental considerations and adequate infrastructure. The specific listing of uses permitted and their densities are determined by in the adopted zoning ordinance.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC USES - Public and semi-public land uses are defined here to include three categories of uses: (1) all enterprises engaged in providing transportation services, communication services or utilities; (2) public buildings and lands, including government buildings, public schools and public park and recreational facilities; (3) semi-public land uses that serve the public but are not government owned, including churches, private schools, hospitals, cemeteries, charitable and social service organizations. Public and semi-public uses are typically scattered throughout the city and planning area. Smaller facilities may be included in with commercial uses when the area is predominately commercial.

COMMERCIAL LAND USES - Commercial uses are those which typically include a variety of businesses located in dedicated shopping centers, along highways and in other concentrated areas. The types of business include the following:

Retail commercial land use consists of those types of establishments, their attendant buildings and lot areas which are used in the retail sale of merchandise for personal, household or farm consumption and the rendering of services which are incidental to that sale.

Service commercial land uses generally consist of those types of establishments, their attendant buildings and lot areas which contain businesses primarily engaged in the rendering of all personal business, repair and amusement services not otherwise included in the office category and not involving the sale of specific merchandise (except incidentally). Examples are barber and beauty shops, dry cleaning establishments, appliance repair shops, and commercial amusement services.

Office commercial land use is comprised of those types of establishments, their attendant buildings, and lot areas which contain businesses

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primarily engaged in rendering financial, insurance, real estate and specialized professional services. Examples are banking establishments, real estate offices, law offices and the like.

Wholesale commercial land use generally consists of those types of establishments, their attendant buildings and lot areas which contain businesses primarily engaged in the selling of merchandise in large quantities to retail commercial operations; to industrial or professional users; or to other wholesalers or acting agents in buying merchandise for or selling merchandise to such users. Wholesale commercial land use is also usually allowed in light industrial zones.

Neighborhood business uses are typically small scale retail and service businesses which are located within developed residential areas of the city. Appropriate businesses are those which provide goods and services to nearby residences within walking distance such as small grocery stores, self service laundries or hair salons. Such business should be located in limited areas to reduce disturbance to nearby residents.

Shopping Centers/Big Box Retail - The purpose of this land use classification is to identify existing shopping centers as well as designate areas that would be suitable for this type of large scale commercial development. A recent trend is for shopping developments to contain large stand alone stores known as big box retail stores rather than a number of stores under one roof. Historically big box retail stores have been unattractive large rectangular concrete buildings surrounded by a sea of pavement for parking. When old stores close, they tend to have low reuse value. Communities are now requiring such stores to have attractive designs, landscaping and parking enhancements that are compatible with the local community. Areas within this designation must have appropriate access to major transportation routes and utilities.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT – this land use is located in the downtown area of London and has a mix of office, retail and service businesses as well as public and semi-public uses. The Central Business District (CBD) is the highest density commercial land use due to multi-storied buildings and lack of setbacks. Some residential uses are also typically found within the

central business district such as apartments located above first floor businesses. Parking on streets and in public lots is necessary to compensate for limited on site parking within the Central Business District.

INDUSTRIAL LAND USES - An industrial land use is that type of establishment, its attendant buildings and lot area which is primarily engaged in the mechanical or chemical transformation of organic or inorganic substances into new products whether the products are sold back into the manufacturing process or sold wholesale or retail. Uses primarily engaged in the warehousing, storage of commodities and recycling and other primary waste handling facilities are also included in the industrial classification. Uses which are of a less intense nature and those which are considered to have lower levels of noise, sound and other annoyances are considered light industrial uses. Large scale, intense uses and those which may be considered a nuisance are considered heavy industrial uses.

PARKS & RECREATION LAND USE – This land use category includes larger scale parks and recreational complexes. Park and recreation land uses may be public or private such as a private golf course. This category may also include open space uses and larger cemeteries. Small pocket parks, cemeteries and other recreational uses may also be located within other land use designations.

FLOODPLAIN/ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE - This land use category includes areas in which development should be prohibited due to environmental concerns. Within Laurel County the largest environmentally sensitive area is the Daniel Boone National Forest. It is shown as a separate use. The 100-year floodplain is also a concern. Development within the floodplain is a threat to both persons and property. It also has the affect of reducing drainage capacity which can increase flooding levels or force flood waters onto other lands. Some uses that would be appropriate in floodplains would be some agriculture uses such as grazing or crops. Open space type recreational uses such as hiking trails, hunting or boating facilities, wildlife management areas and managed forest areas may also be located within the floodplain. Some water related land uses such as docking facilities and marinas are also appropriate for floodplains as long as proper flood proof design is

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used. Due to the scale and need for clarity of the future land use maps other environmentally sensitive uses such as wetlands, mine reserves, etc. are not shown. However, this information should be required to be included on site specific maps for map amendments and site plans.

AGRICULTURAL/OPEN SPACE LAND USES - All land which is used agriculturally (including residential structures on larger lots) or is undeveloped is included in this category. In some areas, these lands may not be well suited to urban-type development due to the lack of infrastructure, adequate roads or distance from urban services. Agriculturally related businesses such as large scale nurseries or lumber operations may be included in this land use category.

EXISTING LAND USE

Before developing a plan for future land use, it is necessary to understand existing land use patterns, trends and relationships as well as problem areas. Existing land use maps for London and Laurel County were prepared based on a window survey, aerial photography and PVA information about the lot. The existing land uses shown may not be 100% accurate as activities on the land are not always visible. Sometimes the use simply could not be determined as a structure had no obvious identifying information. Sometimes there were multiply uses of a property and the most predominate was noted. Due to these reasons, the existing land use maps are often only produced as work maps. As they are helpful in determining existing land use and development patterns, they are included in this plan and are one of the basis from which recommendations for future land use were developed.

It should also be noted that existing land use does not always equate current zoning or, in the case of the county, future zoning. In many cases, a use may be in existence before zoning is approved. If the use is not in conformance with the approved zoning, it is known as a non-conforming use. For example, a commercial business in an area zoned only for residential use would be a non-conforming use. Non-conforming uses are “grandfathered in” meaning that they can continue as long as the use is not changed or

expanded. The specific requirements for non-conforming uses are detailed in the zoning ordinance.

CITY OF LONDON EXISTING LAND USE

London, the county's only incorporated city, acts as the county seat. It is located in the center of the county, at the crossroads of I-75, the Hal Rogers Parkway, US 25, and KY 80. The city began with the development of the older central business district along US 25 near the intersection with US 80. Commercial development initially extended away from this downtown area north and south along US 25 and east along US 80. Early residential development extended away from this downtown core area with most occurring to the west between US 25 and I-75. In the center of London, streets and lots are laid out in a traditional block manner. Figure 8-1 shows existing land use within the City of London.

RESIDENTIAL USE - Residential development originally occurred around the central business district of London. Older residential areas in this area typically have small lots that were not initially designed to accommodate parking of motor vehicles. Residential development has extended away from the CBD in all directions. The most concentrated areas of newer residential development are located to south of KY 192 between I-75 and US 25. Multi-family sites are located at scattered sites throughout the city. There is one large mobile home park within city limits located off of KY 1006 (Old Whitley Road).

COMMERCIAL USE - Commercial development began in London's central business district (CBD) which remains a vital part of the city. The CBD district consists of government buildings, banking institutions, businesses, legal offices, and specialty shops. Strip commercial development extended away from the CBD to include most of US 25 within city limits and E. 4th Street from US 25 east to the CSX railroad. Newer commercial development is concentrated along KY 80 north of the CBD and KY 192 south of the CBD. The commercial development along KY 80 near the I-75 interchange is mostly highway oriented commercial uses such as gas stations, restaurants and hotels. Development along KY 192 is more diverse and includes gas

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stations, restaurants and large strip malls containing big box retailers, grocery stores and shops. This area is also typical strip highway commercial development with multiple access points along the highway with few frontage roads or other access management facilities.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC/OFFICE - Public/semi-public land uses are scattered throughout the city. Some of the larger uses include Marymount Hospital, North Laurel High School, South Laurel High and Middle School, London Elementary School, the Bennett Center, the two Somerset Community College sites and the Laurel County Public Library. There are also a number churches within city limits. Several public/semi-public uses are also located within the central business district. The London-Corbin Airport is located at the southern end of the city.

PARKS & RECREATION LAND USE – There are only a few small sites within city limits dedicated to parks and recreational land use. Each school also has recreational facilities available.

INDUSTRIAL USE – The only concentrated area of industrial development in London is along the CSX railroad which runs north and south through the east side of the city. Other industrial sites are scattered throughout the city.

FLOODPLAIN/ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE – The floodplain of the Little Laurel River extends north and south along the eastern end of London and appears to have formed an informal boundary for development to the east. Development has occurred within the other 100 year floodplain areas within the city including Whitley Branch, Sampson Branch and a small portion of Mitchell Creek. This has caused storm water drainage problems within the city along these creeks.

LAUREL COUNTY EXISTING LAND USE

The land use patterns in Laurel County have been structured by the proximity to the cities of London and Corbin and the transportation network. Development has been limited within the boundaries of the Daniel Boone National Forest in the west end of the county and Levi Jackson State Park. Conversely both Wood Creek and Laurel River Lake have attracted nearby

development. The most intensive land development has occurred near the Cities of London and Corbin, along US 25, I-75 and KY 80, and near Wood Creek Lake and Laurel River Lake. There are a number of small rural communities including Bernstadt, East Bernstadt, Keavy, Hopewell, Lily & Borning with more concentrated development. Figure 8-2 shows existing land use in Laurel County.

RESIDENTIAL USE – Due to the lack of zoning in the unincorporated areas of the county and subdivision regulations which allow residential development on half acre lots (21,780 square feet) when no public sewers are available, a significant amount of agricultural land in the county has been converted to single family residential use. Extensive residential development has occurred not only near London and Corbin but also between the two cities along the I-75/US 25 corridor. The land between I-75 and the Daniel Boone National Forest to the west has had extensive residential development including older piano key lots along rural roads and newer subdivision development. Some of the highest density housing surrounds Wood Creek Lake and the land outside of the National Forest near Laurel River Lake. This development pattern has continued to the east of US 25 also, although it is not yet quite as dense as the west side of the county. The type of development ranges from numerous modest mobile homes and stick built houses to larger estate homes. Due to the lack of zoning, there is no consistency in housing types in many areas. Large estate homes are often found adjacent to older dilapidated houses or mobile homes. This development pattern, while offering a desirable rural or estate lifestyle, poses service delivery, traffic safety, and environmental problems especially where septic tanks are utilized in large concentrations. High density residential use outside of the City of London is mostly limited to some mobile home parks and some multi-family units near Corbin and London where sewer service is available.

COMMERCIAL USE – The largest concentration of commercial development outside of the City of London is located in the North Corbin area especially along US 25E near I-75. Public sewer service is available in this area from Corbin Utilities. There has also been concentrated commercial development north of London along US 25 to KY 490, south of London along US 25 all the way to North Corbin and east of London along KY 80. Public sewer

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service is now available to many of these commercial establishments from London Utilities and Wood Creek Water District. While not as concentrated, there are also numerous other commercial facilities scattered throughout the county presumably on septic systems. There are also numerous home based types of businesses located on the same lot as a residential use in the rural areas of the county. For existing land use purposes, the use which appeared to be the predominate use was shown. Most commercial operations in the county consist of small businesses such as convenience/grocery stores which serve the needs of a limited number of people. The majority of residents in rural Laurel County rely upon the London and Corbin commercial areas to provide retail services.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC/OFFICE – Public uses scattered throughout the rural areas of the county include several elementary schools and volunteer fire departments. Other public and semi-public uses, especially churches and cemeteries, are located throughout the county.

INDUSTRIAL USE- Industrial development in Laurel County has been scattered in nature. The largest industrial area outside of the City of London is the London-Laurel County Industrial Park west of the city and south of KY 80. There is also a large industrial concentration along American Greeting Road in the North Corbin area. The largest stand alone manufacturing facility is Aisin Automotive located off of US 25 between London and Corbin. Other smaller industrial sites are scattered throughout the county. The Laurel Ridge Landfill near Lily and the London Utilities Landfarm are the largest solid waste facilities in the rural areas of the county. However, there are numerous other automotive and heavy equipment recycling facilities (commonly called junk yards) scattered throughout the county. Many of these smaller facilities are not property managed or screened from public view in accordance with state regulations and present an environmental hazard.

PARKS & RECREATIONAL USE – Larger park and recreational uses in the county include Levi Jackson State Park, Camp Wildcat Battlefield, several golf courses and two motocross facilities. These facilities are scattered throughout the county. While the Daniel Boone National Forest includes numerous recreational use areas, due to its size and environmentally sensi-

tive/mixed use nature, government owned land within its boundaries is shown as a separate land use.

FLOODPLAIN/ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE - The Daniel Boone National Forest consists of 1,106 acres located on the western half of the county. It is shown as a separate land use. Floodplains and coal mine areas impact land use in some rural areas of Laurel County. Floodplains are shown on the future land use maps. Coal mine areas are considered environmentally sensitive as any new development on previously mined land is taking place on disturbed land. Settlement, subsidence or erosion in these areas can adversely affect new structures and facilities. Also, new development should not take place on lands that will be mined in the future.

AGRICULTURAL USE/OPEN SPACE – Agricultural uses are mixed in with residential uses in many rural areas of the county. Agriculture is still the predominate use in the north end and east side of Laurel County. Typical agricultural operations include cattle, pasture, hay, tobacco, corn, nurseries, and lumber operations. Land that is undeveloped is included in this use including lots of more than five acres with a house on it.

FUTURE LAND USE

The Future Land Use Plan is intended as a guide for the physical development of the Laurel County. The plan includes proposals for the amount and location of land that will be needed as growth and development continues. Its purpose is to serve as a basis for creating an environment or pattern of development where the various uses of land compliment rather than conflict with each other. It is also intended to serve as a template for future zoning in the unincorporated areas of Laurel County.

The future land use plan includes both the future land use map and the associated text. As stated before, the map and text should be used together when making land use decisions. In some areas the map shows that little or no change from the existing land use pattern is anticipated. In other areas, significant change is anticipated, though this change may occur at various rates or not at all in the next five to ten years due to unpredictable economic

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trends and other factors such as the extension of wastewater services and road improvements. Rezoning of various areas consistent with future land use designations may therefore become appropriate at various times throughout or beyond the five to ten year planning period as conditions warrant. The future land use map for the unincorporated areas of the county are intended to be a template for zoning in the county. Without zoning, current haphazard development patterns will continue.

The second major element of the future land use plan is the land use policy recommendations included in the text. These policies supplement the maps by providing a framework for managing and directing the changes that will occur during the planning period. Application of policy guidelines will help determine when an area is ready for the changes anticipated on the land use map. At times, application of the policy guidelines may indicate the appropriateness of changes not anticipated on the land use map, thus necessitating an amendment to the zoning map prior to granting a development request.

In addition to determining the appropriate location and intensity of various land uses, the policy guidelines provide a framework for reviewing and ensuring the quality of new development. They also assist the planning commission in regulating the impacts of new development on surrounding uses, the environment and existing public service delivery systems. These policies will be implemented through the Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations, and review of subdivision and site plan development proposals.

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

Basic assumptions about future social and economic conditions in the county and city underlie the formulation of goals, objectives and policies upon which this plan is based. These basic assumptions, some of which have been stated or implied in previous chapters are as follows:

1. Economic growth will continue in the county as a result of further infrastructure improvements and existing development pressures. Growth at the current rate is likely to continue due to the proximity to I-75 and the future I-66 corridor.

2. Future industrial development may eventually be limited by the lack of appropriate industrial sites within the county.
3. Population growth in Laurel County will occur in response to economic opportunities, location near transportation routes and cost-of-living factors. Some of this growth will result from a natural increase in population with most population shifts resulting from in-migration.
4. The major transportation mode in the county and cities will continue to be the private automobile. With increased traffic and congestion, the provision of a functional, efficient, multi-modal transportation system will become increasingly important.
5. Unless zoning is enacted in the county, the current haphazard location of development will result in increasing conflicts due to incompatible land uses and the lack of land for development.
6. Pressure for residential and commercial development will continue in conjunction with regional economic development, transportation and infrastructure improvements.

URBAN SERVICES BOUNDARY

The principle objective of the Land Use Plan for Laurel County is to encourage urban development into areas where urban services, especially public sewers, either presently exist or where such services can easily be extended without undue cost. Urban development includes, but is not limited to industrial, commercial, high density residential and concentrated single family uses. It generally does not include agricultural uses and their related housing. The urban services boundary for the area around the City of London is defined as the area within one half mile of existing sewer service. Urban development should only occur in this area if public water and wastewater service is available and there is capacity to treat the wastewater produced by the new development. New development, infill development and redevelopment should be encouraged within the existing city limits of London where these and other urban services are already available before allowing development in areas.

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INTERSTATE 66

From a land use planning perspective, it is important to consider the proposed route for I-66 when making current land use decisions. The location of the preferred corridor for I-66 from Pulaski County to I-75 as determined by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet is shown on the future land use map for Laurel County. Development within or near the proposed route should not occur as it may conflict with future construction of the interstate and result in future displacement of residences and businesses.

The potential corridor for I-66 from I-75 east to the Hal Rogers Parkway is shown for general long term planning purposes only. There is no schedule for a detailed study of this corridor at this time so the determination of any actual route alternatives for this segment is many years in the future and subject to public involvement, consultation, environmental evaluation, and engineering considerations. It is shown as a reminder that I-66 is proposed to eventually connect from I-75 to the Hal Rogers Parkway somewhere south of London.

LOCATION PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES

General principles relating to the location of urban land uses provide a reference for the planning commission in the development of a Land Use Plan and other tools to promote orderly and systematic growth within Laurel County. Principles for the major types of land uses are provided below as guidelines for the consideration of establishing zoning in the county. These policies and the land use map should be utilized together in consideration of the most appropriate zone for any particular parcel of land. The map should provide the planning commission with the preferred land use for a site, while the written development policies serve as guidelines by which to review the development plan to ensure conformance with the comprehensive plan and determine the appropriate zoning classification.

General principles for all new development:

1. All new development shall meet all applicable federal, state and local standards regulating the impact of development on land, air, water, historic resources or natural areas in the county.

2. Development should be contiguous to already built-up areas to minimize costs of public facilities such as water, sewer, police and fire services.
3. No lot shall be created by any subdivision of property that will result in a failure of any lot, existing structure or activity on land to conform to any applicable city or county regulations.
4. Where land conditions are in doubt, it shall be the responsibility of the developer to prove the feasibility of development upon the land in compliance with federal, state and local regulations and/or standards.
5. All development shall utilize and retain natural topography and vegetation in the development design and layout to the extent practicable.
6. No development should be allowed to be built in designated 100-year floodplain areas or other environmentally sensitive areas.
7. The protection of structures and sites that have historical value is encouraged during rehabilitation activities and infill development.
8. Areas of critical environmental importance, areas of high ecological sensitivity, and areas containing unique features shall be preserved in the development process.
9. Compatibility standards as specified in the following land use development policies should be considered when developing a zoning ordinance or map. These standards shall require more intensive uses locating next to less intense uses to provide buffering to protect the less intense use from the impacts of noise, glare, dust, vibration, odors, traffic or other vehicular use and visual appearance. Acceptable buffers may include any combination of fencing, deciduous and/or evergreen plantings, open space, earthen mounding, etc. as accepted and approved by the planning commission in the development plan process.
10. Onsite permanent or temporary storage of drainage waters should be provided in each development to compensate for the amount of drainage capacity lost to impermeable surfaces.
11. Approved storm water drainage systems separate from the wastewater collection system should be required of all developments.
12. New development near existing public sewers must be required to connect to public sewers. Large scale residential development on septic systems should be discouraged. However, if development on sep-

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tic systems is allowed, developers should be required to consult with the health environmentalists at the London Health Department prior to developing a subdivision plan to determine if there are any problem areas on the site which might require lots larger than ½ acre to accommodate properly functioning septic systems.

13. A site specific noise analysis shall be required when residential or other noise sensitive uses are proposed along interstate routes, parkways or the CSX railroad. Appropriate setbacks, berms, walls, landscape buffers or other mitigation measures shall be used to reduce the impact of noise to acceptable levels.
14. New development should not be permitted along the proposed route of I-66 west of London to limit adverse impacts from future construction of the interstate.

CITY OF LONDON FUTURE LAND USE

Figure 8-3 depicts the Future Land Use Map for the City of London and the immediate surrounding area. As this area is already highly developed, appropriate infill development and redevelopment of other existing uses will be primary future land use issues for areas currently within city limits. A new frontage road proposed to run parallel to I-75 between the two London interchanges may open up some land for development near the proposed Kentucky Hills Heritage Center. Figure 8-4 is the Future Land Use Map for the unincorporated areas of Laurel County. On the future land use maps areas that should remain agricultural or undeveloped are shown in white. As development is not permitted on government lands within the Daniel Boone National Forest, these lands are shown as a separate land use.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

The central business district of a city typically functions as the historic focal point of the community as well as serving a variety of functions including retailing, entertainment, administration and government. In addition to the general commercial development policies, development policies for the central business district in London should encourage:

1. An efficient and compact place in which to move about and conduct business. The central business district functions more efficiently if shopping and other activities are oriented to the pedestrian. Convenient parking lots and sidewalks are a necessity. Therefore, any development or redevelopment of properties in this area shall provide adequate sidewalks and parking facilities. Parking facilities should be provided to the rear and side of lots in order to minimize the visual impact of these uses.
2. The central business district should be an attractive place in which to shop. The development of a safe, pedestrian friendly environment in the London central business district should be encouraged.
3. Infill development or redevelopment of an area within the central business district should be compatible with the historic context of the area and consistent with existing structures in scale, mass, design and streetscape. Any plans for development or redevelopment should focus on the preservation and revitalization of the area, keeping a similar mixture of land uses. In addition, improvements in the central business district should be consistent with the goals established for the city's Renaissance on Main program. Encroachment of commercial or industrial uses into established residential neighborhoods is discouraged.
4. The development of a variety of activities within the central business district shall be encouraged to enhance its appeal for human interaction.
5. The renovation of the upper stories of existing downtown buildings for residential and office uses should be encouraged.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

As land suitable for industrial development is limited and industrial uses need to be buffered from residential uses, it is important to locate major industrial uses first when considering future land use for an area. Industrial development should be located in areas where adequate utilities are available. Fire protection and other emergency services should also be readily available. Industrial sites should be located close to major transportation facilities.

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All future manufacturing developments should be located in planned industrial parks. There are a limited amount of high quality existing industrial sites and facilities in Laurel County. About 60 acres are available at the London – Laurel County Industrial Park #4 on KY 80. Another 47 acres is available at the London-Laurel Air Park just south of the airport. Existing sites should be used first before additional land is developed for industrially use. In some cases this may require redevelopment of existing industrial facilities.

Some small industrial-type home occupations and agricultural accessory uses should be permitted in agricultural districts as conditional uses. These small industries should include services related to agricultural activities such as farm implement or truck repair, ham curing, limited warehousing, construction equipment storage. Home occupations in agricultural districts should be flexible but moderately restrictive. Solid waste facilities including landfills, land farms and some recycling operations are also more suitably located in rural or undeveloped areas. Industrial development on reclaimed mined lands should only be approved if engineering and geo-technical studies indicate that the site is suitable for such development and appropriate water, wastewater and other infrastructure can be provided.

The following are specific industrial development policies:

1. Existing industrial activities, which are presently located in areas that are not desirable for industrial development or expansion, should either be redeveloped or stabilized (not expanded).
2. Industries should be located in planned industrial parks or adjacent to an existing industry to form industrial clusters.
3. Land, which can be most advantageously used for industrial purposes, should be identified and reserved for industrial use and encouraged to be exclusively used for such purposes. These areas are shown as future industrial use areas on the future land use maps. Small pockets of light industrial uses may be desirable in areas where existing commercial activities have a similar impact on adjacent uses.
4. Industrial sites should have good access to highways and when required, rail and air facilities.

5. Industrial areas should be located in areas served by or capable of being served by water, public sewer, gas and electricity within the planning period. The availability and sufficient size must be a prerequisite for an industrial use.
6. Industrial developments shall provide adequate buffering between proposed uses and adjacent existing or zoned commercial and residential uses. These sites should also be separated from other areas by such buffers as major highways, railroad lines, parks, greenways or natural geological features. In addition, landscaping and beautification of all industrial sites shall be required.
7. Enough land should be provided for industrial operations, future expansions, off-street parking, loading and unloading.
8. All applications for new or expanded industrial development shall include an assessment of impacts on the environment, existing service systems and adjacent properties. This assessment shall include:
 - a. Impacts on land, air quality, surface and ground water, historic resources and natural areas.
 - b. Impacts on community service systems, including water, wastewater, traffic, schools, police, fire and recreation.
 - c. Impacts on adjacent land uses, including noise, traffic, glare, dust, odors, vibrations and visual appearance at the property line of the proposed use.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Most commercial development should be limited to areas in or near London and the north Corbin area where adequate roads, utilities and emergency services are already available. For future zoning in the unincorporated areas of the county, only limited areas where urban services are available should be zoned for commercial use. For the remaining areas of the county, home based businesses that do not generate traffic should be allowed with appropriate restrictions such as no more than three or four persons employed. Other commercial uses and some small scale industrial uses outside of areas zoned for such uses could be allowed as conditional uses. This will allow public comment and a site analysis to determine if the proposed use is appropriate.

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The following development policies should be considered when determining the location of commercial development:

1. Existing commercial activities, which are presently located in areas that are not desirable for commercial development or expansion, should either be redeveloped or stabilized (not expanded).
2. Commercial areas should be accessible to major traffic arteries; however, new curb-cuts should be kept to a minimum by requiring commercial facilities to share frontage roads, service access areas or parking lots.
3. Concentrated clusters of stores, as opposed to linear developments, along major thoroughfares should be encouraged, as they are more convenient and tend to protect overall property values.
4. Buffering or screening shall be required when a commercial area is proposed next to existing residential areas. Trees, landscaping, benches and other site amenities should be incorporated into the design.
5. Office land uses which are not part of retail or service establishments have less of an impact on residential areas than other commercial uses. Professional office developments can be used as a transition use or buffer between residential areas and commercial uses. They can also be used as a buffer between residential uses and noise generating uses such as parkways and railroads.
6. Commercial development should be designed to include sidewalks or other alternative routes for pedestrians, bicycles and disabled people.
7. Commercial signs should not be a visual nuisance or safety hazard to vehicular traffic.
8. Commercial design shall include adequate parking facilities with entrances and exits from major streets that minimize interference with traffic flow.
9. All commercial development proposals shall include an assessment of impacts on the environment, on existing service systems, traffic patterns and on adjacent properties.

SHOPPING CENTER DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

In addition to the general commercial development policies, the following issues should be addressed in the development of shopping centers including those composed of big box retailers:

1. Development of shopping centers should be allowed when it can be proved that the need clearly exists. Redevelopment of existing shopping centers should occur (where there are vacancies) prior to developing new shopping centers.
2. There should be a smooth transition between the commercial area and adjacent land uses. This transition should reflect existing architectural and residential character.
3. Shopping centers should be developed according to appropriate shopping center standards in order to ensure attractive, stable, convenient places to shop and to permit maximum benefit and support of shopping centers from compatible uses and community facilities.
 - a. A properly designed internal traffic circulation and adequate parking shall be required. Large parking lots shall be adequately landscaped. Where possible, parking areas should be dispersed throughout the site and/or located to the rear and side of the development with minimal view to the motoring public.
 - b. Screened loading and unloading areas that cannot be viewed by the motoring public or adjacent residential areas.
 - c. Pedestrian circulation within the proposed development and between the commercial area and adjacent neighborhoods and other public facilities.
 - d. Buffering from less intense adjacent uses
 - e. Adequate setback from the street right-of-way.
 - f. Where adjacent to residential areas, lighting and loud speaker systems (where allowed) should be non-obtrusive.

PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Public facilities such as schools, city and/or county administrative buildings, fire stations, etc. should be designed so as to compliment the areas

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in which they are located. They should be convenient to the population served while at the same time creating the least possible conflict with adjoining uses. Particular importance is attached, therefore, to adequate site size to accommodate future as well as existing needs. Buildings should be properly related to parking and service areas and the streets must have adequate capacity to handle the circulation requirements of the facility. Churches and other religious facilities vary greatly in size and impact on the surrounding area. It is therefore recommended that they be permitted as conditional uses in all agricultural and residential zones and permitted uses in commercial and public/semi-public zones.

Utility development policies are an important part of a land use plan. These policies can be used to control and guide development by encouraging development where utility services are available. Due to topographical conditions, sparse population, and/or remoteness of many areas of the county, it is often cost prohibitive and impractical to extend public utilities to those areas.

The following policies are recommended to guide future utility extensions:

1. Adequate utilities should be extended on a priority basis to all areas within the planning area that are urban in character (and within the service areas of the respective utility providers). Those sites within the city that are currently unserved shall be the first priority. The utilities extended into urban or urbanizing areas should meet health and safety standards, including fire-fighting capability.
2. All new developments whether they are residential, commercial, industrial, or recreational in character should have the proper utilities installed by the developer whether private or public.
3. The extension of utilities of proper capacity in designated growth areas should precede development or be installed at the time development occurs.
4. The use of underground utilities should be encouraged where feasible.
5. When utility construction equipment, materials or hardware are stored out of doors, the site shall be screened and landscaped in such a manner as not to detract from the surrounding area.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Three types of future single family residential land use are shown. These are low density residential, medium density residential and rural estate/agricultural. Given that extensive residential development on half acre lots has already occurred in large portions of the county, it is not likely that it will be possible to limit future residential development to areas served by public sewers. However, to allow time for the extension of public sewers to these developed areas before extending development to other areas and to preserve some areas of the county for agricultural uses, a five or ten acre minimum lot size is recommended for the rural estate/agricultural areas. The ½ acre lot size is the minimum recommended lot size for the low density residential land use. The medium density residential use would be permitted where public sewers are available and include single family homes on lots as small as 10,000 square feet, duplexes and small concentrations of townhouses (four units or less). High density residential development should be limited to areas served by public sewers and adequate public roads.

The following are general principles that apply to all residential development:

1. The increase or decrease of density can function as a transition between incompatible land uses.
2. Where public sewers are available, residential lots should be smaller in size. Residential development should be of a very low density and rural in character in areas where urban services (especially public sewers) cannot economically be provided and are not anticipated to be provided within the planning period.
3. Permitted residential densities shall be calculated on the basis of net developable land, excluding street rights-of-way, steeped sloped areas, other public land dedication and shall be compatible with adjacent land uses.
4. Residential areas shall generally be located away from incompatible land uses such as large commercial or industrial sites, or other uses characterized by high traffic volumes, odor, noise, dust or dirt, inappropriately intense lighting and any other nuisance created by these types of uses.

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5. Due to the impacts of noise and vibrations, new residential development should not occur immediately adjacent to heavily used railroads and interstate type highways including state parkways. The amount of setback or the need for noise barriers will depend on the amount of highway and train traffic and other factors such as the location of areas where trains are required to blow a whistle due to railroad crossings. Non-residential construction or appropriate landscaping can act as a buffer. A noise assessment should be required to determine specific requirements.
6. High density residential development should be located with access to adequate collector streets or higher level roads. It can be used to provide a buffer between commercial areas and lower density housing.
7. The specific residential zone for a particular site should depend on site specific conditions. The maximum permitted density for a particular zone shall be determined by referring to the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map and by considering the following criteria:

Soils and Slope Assessment

- Acreage in different soil groups.
- Acreage in slopes if varying degrees
- Other physical limitations of the site (floodplain, wetlands, poor drainage etc.)

Characteristics of road network serving the development

- Distance from the nearest state or federal highway with available capacity to absorb projected increases in traffic due to proposed new development. Traffic analysis is suggested for higher density developments and should be provided by the developer upon request from the planning commission prior to the approval of the development proposal.
- Distance from a publicly maintained road of at least 18 feet in width with available capacity to absorb the projected increases in traffic due to the proposed development.

Characteristics of the access road

- Hard surfaced, state maintained road
- Hard surfaced, city/county maintained road
- Gravel surfaced, city/county maintained through road
- Gravel surfaced, city/county maintained dead-end road
- Public or private road not publicly maintained

Community Services/Public Facilities Assessment

- Percent of adjacent and surrounding area developed
- Distance to nearest development
- Compatibility with adjacent or surrounding development, in terms of type, intensity and nature or existing or planned land uses.
- Adequacy of area to carry additional storm water, available storm water facilities including on site storage of runoff.
- Access to central water supply with available capacity to serve the proposed development
- Access to central wastewater treatment facility with available capacity to serve the proposed development
- For sites on septic systems, the capacity of soils and siting requirements for septic systems based on a general evaluation by Health Department inspectors.
- Distance to a fire department and/or a fire hydrant.
- Distance to a public school facility with capacity to accommodate additional students at the projected date of project completion.
- Distance to nearest neighborhood shopping center

Design

- Residential units should not be located with access directly to arterial or major collector roads.

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- Adequate buffering and/or building setbacks shall be required where residential uses abut arterial or major collector roads or existing industrial or commercial uses.
- Each residential area or neighborhood should be served internally only by minor streets that discourage through traffic. These minor streets should channel local traffic into collector streets that serve to connect several neighborhoods with major thoroughfares.
- Residential developments should offer amenities in the form of greenspace/recreation areas, varied topography, attractive vegetation and good views, avoiding sites that are low, poorly drained or with slopes exceeding 12 percent.
- All residential development shall be required to provide adequate off-street parking, street lighting, sidewalks (or other alternative pedestrian routes).
- Infill housing development should be compatible (in size, design, construction materials, etc.) with existing homes and neighborhoods.
- Open Space/Recreational areas should be developed or dedicated as part of residential development.

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

Agriculture is an important sector of the economy in Laurel County. In order for the county to continue to benefit from an agricultural economy, land must be reserved for this use and be protected from encroachment of urban and indiscriminate residential uses. This is important especially for those areas that consist of prime farmland.

In recent years an increasing amount of land has been subdivided into lots for residential use in the unincorporated areas of the county. This type of residential development has two major disadvantages. First, it makes inefficient use of the land, creating subdivisions with larger lots to accommodate septic tanks which are more difficult for homeowners to maintain. In addition, groundwater contamination is likely to occur with the concentrated use of septic systems. Second, it threatens the viability of prime agricultural lands

as conflicts often arise when concentrated residential uses are established next to farms.

In order to preserve some land in the county for agricultural use, it is recommended that the minimum lot size in the areas shown as agricultural use be increased to five or ten acres. The advantages of this would be to reduce residential development in areas used for agricultural purposes and maintain larger lot sizes more suitable for agricultural use. It is generally accepted that a minimum of ten acres is needed for most agricultural enterprises to be economically viable. The disadvantages of this option are that it greatly increases development and housing costs.

An alternative would be Conservation or Cluster zoning for residential subdivisions in the agricultural area. In this scenario, a concentrated area of housing is permitted in exchange for set aside open areas. Instead of 20 houses scattered over 20 five-acre lots, 20 houses could be placed on ten acres with the remaining 90 acres dedicated for open space, agricultural or recreational use. This type of subdivision accommodates residential development while preserving open space. The disadvantages are that more complicated legal mechanisms must be used to insure that open areas are not developed and providing alternative wastewater disposal methods.

Another solution is to only permit residential development where public sewers are currently available. Any final regulations for development in these areas should be developed in direct consultation with members of the Laurel County Fiscal Court as they will ultimately have to approve any zoning ordinance.

The following criteria should be considered when development in agricultural areas is proposed:

1. Soils. Soils considered to be prime farmland by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are of major importance in providing food and fiber. They have properties favorable for economic production of high yields of crops with minimal inputs of economic resources. Farming these soils results in the least damage to the environment. Deterring

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urban development from areas with prime soils should be encouraged to be consistent with the goals related to agriculture.

2. **Previous Land Use.** A good method for determining which lands are no longer agriculturally viable is by looking at when the land was most recently farmed. Land currently being farmed or farmed within the last year may still be economically productive while land not farmed for the last five years may have lost its utility.
3. **Surrounding Land Use.** Reducing conflict between various land uses is a central concern. Farming requires use of heavy noisy machinery and produces dust that can be disturbing to non-farm rural residents. On the other hand, farmers may be disturbed by vandalism to crops and fences that may occur when large numbers of people live near their operations. Residential developments should be discouraged in areas with active farming where little previous residential development has occurred.
4. **Availability of Urban Services.** This indicator is concerned with the costs of providing additional public services to previously undeveloped areas. Development in areas located great distances from existing city services, police and fire protection is inefficient and can cause the cost of providing the services to increase.
5. **Type and Width of Road.** This is another indicator of public service costs. New development on narrow or unpaved roads will eventually require road improvements. An orderly plan for road improvements is the most desirable and cost efficient method of managing public road systems. Consequently, rural residential development should be located near or along already improved roads. However, lots for residential development should not front directly on collector or arterial roads.

SURFACE MINED LANDS

Previously mined areas are shown on the future land use maps for informational purposes only. This information was provided by the Kentucky Geological Survey. It was produced using available mine map information and may not be completely accurate or include all previously mined areas. It is provided to alert developers, land owners and the planning commission that

these areas should be looked at carefully if future development is planned. The most appropriate future land use for reclaimed mine lands is wildlife habitat, forest, open space and some types of agriculture such as pasture. In Eastern Kentucky, for example, elk have been successfully established on reclaimed mine lands to the point where limited hunting has been allowed and wildlife viewing has become a popular tourist attraction.

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