

# Scott County 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update

## Selected Land Use and Growth Management Policies

### IV. LAND USE:

#### **B. Proposed Land Use General Goals and Policies**

The land use goals and policies create a vehicle to determine, organize, and define the character and intensity of land use in the unincorporated areas of the County and are coordinated with the cities. This should be done both in terms of existing and future patterns of development. Map IV-B-1 shows the proposed Land Use described in this Plan. The Map identifies the areas proposed to be preserved for long term agriculture, protected for urban expansion and proposed for low-density residential development. It also shows areas where commercial/industrial development could be accommodated. Goals and policies controlling each area identified on this map are separated into sections within the Growth Management section of this Plan This Plan proposes a land use philosophy that will:

- promote the majority of growth in the County's eight cities;
- preserve urban expansion areas around the cities where municipal services are expected and planned for;
- allow for managed rural residential growth while preserving options for future development;
- allow commercial/industrial uses within limited planned areas;
- preserve agricultural uses.

The following goals and policies serve as a reference for land use planning decisions.

#### **B-1 Develop a cohesive countywide land use pattern that insures compatibility and functional relationships among activities and between jurisdictions.**

a. Provide for and encourage opportunities for public participation - especially township officials in the planning and development review process.

*Reason: Input from many perspectives leads to high quality decisions.*

b. Build on strengths throughout the County such as environmental quality, open space, strong industrial and commercial areas in cities, prime farm land, recreation and entertainment facilities, quality local government, and excellent school and park amenities in defining the County's identity.

*Reason: Scott County has many valuable resources. New development should be compatible with existing development, and compatible with the environment.*

c. To the maximum extent possible, development policies and regulations shall be applied consistently and uniformly.

*Reason: Inconsistently applied policies and regulations are not fair, result in inconsistencies with adopted policies, and open the door to legal challenges that question the entire system.*

d. Geographic land use designations and related zoning classifications shall be changed only when it can be demonstrated that such modifications are in the best long-term interest of the County. Such changes shall occur only when they will promote land use compatibility and meet the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

*Reason: Land use zoning should not be changed simply to accommodate a proposed use, but should be established and maintained to the extent necessary to assure compatibility of adjacent land uses.*

e. Proactively address outstanding County issues or concerns that may detract from the County's identity.

*Reason: There are a number of problems that currently face the County that should be addressed and which should not be exacerbated by future development. These are: traffic bottlenecks at high-traffic intersections, threats to ground water resources, erosion and flooding problems and land use incompatibilities.*

f. Gravel mining shall be allowed as an interim land use as appropriate within Urban Expansion, Agricultural, Commercial/Industrial areas and Rural Residential Reserve areas. Extraction shall follow strict standards for operations and end use reclamation.

*Reason: Gravel resources are needed by society. Gravel removal operations are generally compatible land uses in industrial and rural areas. However, gravel mining should be looked at as an interim use rather than an end use of the land. End uses should be compatible with surrounding land uses and in conformance with the comprehensive plan.*

g. Asphalt plants are only allowed accessory to gravel mining operations and adjacent to temporary road construction sites.

*Reason: Asphalt plants present land use concerns similar to gravel mining operations and are generally associated with gravel mining in areas where road construction is occurring sufficiently to sustain their viability. Asphalt is necessary for society and should be allowed where operations are compatible with surrounding land uses. Temporary asphalt plants associated with road construction projects, if properly located, afford society with improved economics for road construction. Asphalt plants are not compatible with most other land uses.*

**B-2 Advocate land use development that is accompanied by a sufficient level of supportive services and facilities (roads, storm water management systems, parking, access, etc.).**

a. Plan for and stage development to ensure it is accompanied by sufficient corresponding public infrastructure and support facilities such as roads, storm water management systems, parks, fire, medical and police protection, etc.

*Reason: Premature development that occurs before roads, storm water management systems and public services are available presents an unnecessary risk to new residents and businesses and increased cost for tax payers for later provision of these services. Developers - not existing taxpayers, should pay for their proportionate share of costs for needed infrastructure related to or resulting from new developments.*

b. Control direct access to major collector and arterial roadways.

*Reason: Provide safe access to higher speed traffic conditions on roadways, which are designed to move traffic efficiently.*

c. Allow institutional uses such as churches or other uses provided that all traffic, infrastructure, storm water management and compatibility issues are addressed.

*Reason: Institutional uses that entail large numbers of people with associated traffic, storm water runoff and wastewater treatment should be located where investments in these services have already been provided. The lower cost of rural land for the larger parcels needed to support these facilities are often viewed by the individuals who are responsible for planning for expansion of these facilities as attractive options in the absence of an appreciation for the value of the municipal services which are lacking. The County should require the costs associated with provision of necessary utilities and roads be paid for by the development -- i.e. growth paying for itself.*

**B-3 Maintain and, where necessary, upgrade the aesthetics and environmental quality within the commercial and industrial land use area especially along TH 169 and I-35 corridors.**

a. Inform local property owners of the regulations, programs or incentives that may assist them in the maintenance or renovation of their properties through community education, seminars, newsletters, and outreach programs.

*Reason: Education is far less expensive than enforcement. Acceptance of policies and regulations by an informed public is easier to achieve than by a skeptical, uninformed public.*

b. Support private redevelopment of commercial/industrial properties which display deteriorated building conditions, obsolete site design, incompatible land use arrangements and/or under-utilization of the site, especially in the highly visible TH 169 and I-35 corridors.

*Reason: Land valuation is driven by market demand. Successful high visibility business and high value residential developments will not locate in an area appearing to be blighted.*

**B-4 Ensure that land use and development is to be compatible with features of the natural environment and development is to be accommodated without destroying environmental features and natural amenities.**

a. The preservation, restoration, and enhancement of shoreland and wetland environments in their natural state shall be encouraged. Where desirable and practical, development which complements these features and that which is in conformance with federal, state, and local regulations shall be promoted.

*Reason: This is a federal and state policy supported by regulations. This reduces erosion caused by excessive storm water runoff, enhances the natural features of the environment, contributes to ground water recharge, and improves air quality.*

**B-5 Maintain, protect and, where necessary, upgrade the character of individual neighborhoods, which includes elimination of non-conforming and incompatible uses.**

a. Encourage the redevelopment of substandard, obsolete or blighted properties including the removal of obsolete structures inconsistent with the proposed land use changes.

*Reason: Leaving old farm buildings that were designed for agricultural uses in a residential development that consists of more expensive construction often results in citizen complaints, attractive nuisances and property devaluation.*

b. Provide land use transitions and/or proper buffering or screening between distinctly different types of land uses.

*Reason: One of the major complaints across the nation from residents is that of noise incompatibility. Billions of tax dollars have been spent nationally to address noise problems. Odor complaints from incompatible rural land uses are increasingly becoming a problem. Traffic congestion from commercial and industrial areas especially on local roads that were not designed to accommodate such traffic intensity presents safety concerns.*

c. Property values shall be protected through the harmonious relationship of land uses, roads, and natural features and the maintenance of properties.

*Reason: Property values and taxable valuation are driven by market influences. Properties with good access, adjacent natural amenities, and compatible land uses have higher market values.*

d. Renewal, replacement, and redevelopment of substandard and grossly incompatible development shall be accomplished through public action and private means.

*Reason: Scott County desires nonconforming uses and structures to be brought into conformity with current standards.*

**B-6 Plan for growth through a phased basis, providing for a logical extension of urban and rural growth patterns and related community services in a fiscally responsible manner.**

a. Examine requested land use changes in relation to adjoining land uses, site accessibility, storm water management systems availability, and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and policies.

*Reason: An objective list of criteria needs to be used for consideration of proposed land use changes.*

b. Adequate lot sizes and soundly constructed buildings of sufficient size shall be required for all types of development.

*Reason: Lots which require on-site sewage systems, individual wells and storm water management facilities must be larger than those served by municipal services. Larger size lots also provide more flexibility and options for the changing needs of the owners which otherwise would encroach and jeopardize the areas needed for these basic*

*facilities. Poorly constructed buildings require premature replacement, lead to blight conditions and adversely impact surrounding property market values.*

c. Transitions between distinctly differing types of land uses shall be accomplished in an orderly fashion, which does not create a negative (economic, social, or physical) impact on adjoining developments.

*Reason: Communities consist of many land uses, some of which are incompatible with others. Buffer areas between incompatible land uses reduce complaints, maintain the desired market values, and improve public safety and enjoyment of life for residents.*

d. Incompatible land uses shall be properly regulated so that conflicts are minimized. This shall be achieved through the use of natural and man-made physical barriers (i.e., topography, drainageways, transportation routes, etc.), distances, landscape screening, and/or proper physical orientation of lots and buildings.

*Reason: A variety of land uses are necessary for the economic well being of a community. Achieving a compatible co-existence of these land uses is possible through a combination of physical separation and regulatory control.*

**B-7 Promote the continued development of high quality, high value industries where municipal services exist that enhance the economy through an improved tax base and expanded employment base for County residents.**

a. Support collaborative actions with the eight cities to promote Scott County as a great place to locate industries and job producing businesses.

*Reason: Industry and large businesses should be located within urban service areas.*

## **V. GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

The rate of growth since the mid 1990s (with the opening of the Bloomington Ferry Bridge) has raised issues with regard to its impact on public services, including roads and parks, storm water management, natural environment, ground water and compatibility of land uses. The Scott County Board of Commissioners, recognizing these issues, has identified the need for a growth management strategy. The following goals and policies are provided to define and guide Scott County's growth management efforts, focusing on the unincorporated areas. Several policies involve consideration of only non-hydric land for determining development densities and the use of cluster subdivision design. These concepts will ensure environmentally safe and orderly growth, more efficient land consumption, and the preservation of buildable open space for future use at higher densities when infrastructure becomes available.

### **A. General Goals and Policies**

**A-2 Encourage commercial/industrial development of high architectural and aesthetic quality in order to enhance Scott County's image, promote building durability, and expand the local tax base.**

a. Develop standards with incentives that encourage businesses to construct aesthetically pleasing buildings.

*Reason: Higher architectural and more aesthetic buildings hold their value longer, improve tax base and attract other higher value businesses to the area.*

**A-3 Attracting, retaining and expanding businesses and industry is a priority for diversifying the local tax base and promoting local employment opportunities. The majority of new commercial and industrial uses should be concentrated where urban services are available.**

a. Identify specific planned areas with appropriate standards for infrastructure and aesthetics where small businesses with a need for outside storage can locate within the County.

*Reason: There is an unmet need for industrial/commercial areas where outside storage is allowed within the County. However, these types of businesses are not often aesthetically desirable along major transportation corridors without well designed and maintained designs and landscaping.*

b. Commercial/Industrial uses should only be allowed where compatible with existing and planned uses.

*Reason: This type of land use often presents incompatibility problems such as noise, dust, traffic, odor, lighting etc.*

c. Land for future commercial/industrial uses should be identified and reserved until either a) urban services are extended to the area or b) supplies of existing vacant commercial/industrial land are substantially depleted.

*Reason: Areas that have been generally guided toward commercial/industrial development which are anticipated to receive urban services that will significantly improve the value of the land and tax base should be protected from being developed with land uses which would conflict with the future development to commercial/industrial. However, these areas could be developed with compatible commercial/industrial developments before urban services are available if market demands dictate.*

d. New commercial and industrial land uses shall be allowed within Commercial/Industrial defined areas provided that all traffic, infrastructure, storm water management, and compatibility issues are addressed.

*Reason: Commercial and industrial development is accompanied with relatively intensive demands best provided by municipal services. These include: storm water management, treatment of industrial/commercial wastewater not compatible with individual sewage treatment systems, fire protection, traffic and water supply.*

## **I. Natural Resources**

**I-7 Preserve and protect known non-metallic mineral deposits for future access to the fullest extent feasible.**

- a. Identify and protect existing mining areas from incompatible development where feasible.
- b. Require detailed gravel pit operation and reclamation plans that identify ultimate end use of the property that is complementary to surrounding and future land uses, does not adversely affect natural resources and the means by which the end use will be implemented.
- c. The siting and operation of gravel mining operations must consider compatibility with adjoining and planned land uses and mitigation measures to reduce nuisance concerns such as noise, dust, hours of operation and traffic.