

# CHAPTER IV – Transportation

An effective and efficient transportation system is one of the most critical elements a city or county must have if it is to prosper and provide its residents with the necessary residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational facilities. Land use is affected immeasurably by local and regional transportation systems. An overview of the local transportation network is therefore included as a part of all comprehensive plans.

## A. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Before the advent of the automobile, the Kentucky River and railroads played major roles in the establishment and growth of communities in Woodford County. The Kentucky River, which forms the western boundary of the County, provided easy access to the area and the community of Clifton was an important early port of entry. The Lexington-Ohio Railroad, traversing the northeast portion of the County provided both passenger and freight services for people and goods entering and leaving the County. Midway owes its early growth and development to its proximity to this transportation facility. The Southern Railroad, linking Lexington, Versailles and points south, was constructed in the mid – 1800's and helped to establish Versailles as a transportation hub for people and goods.

In addition to the River and Railroads, several “roads” are historically significant in terms of the growth of the County and the land use patterns that have emerged over time. Old Frankfort Pike, which connects Lexington and Frankfort, was originally built to accommodate travel by horse and wagon between these communities, as well as to provide access to the farms on either side. Over the years, this “path” has been improved to accommodate the automobile, but without significant damage to the surrounding landscapes. It is one of the more scenic of the corridors linking various communities within the Bluegrass Region.

U.S. 60 linking Frankfort, Versailles and Lexington has become the major intra-urban facility serving Woodford County and the region, particularly Versailles. Its linkages with the I-64 and the Bluegrass Parkway have increased its use as a transportation corridor for the movement of people and goods. In addition, U.S. 60 is a primary route for access to the Bluegrass Airport in Lexington.

Two major east-west limited access multi-lane highways cross Woodford County. Interstate 64 connects I-75 north of Lexington with the greater Louisville highway network and beyond. This interstate, part of the national interstate system, provides Woodford County with access to all the major interstate and parkway systems in the state. Woodford County is served by one interchange at KY 341 north of Midway off US

62 and US 421. A second interchange is just north of the Woodford County line in Franklin County on US 60.

The second major east-west corridor serving Woodford County is the Bluegrass Parkway, whose current eastern terminus is in Woodford County at US 60. The Parkway, connecting the greater Lexington area with Elizabethtown, I-65, and western Kentucky, is a part of the state's old toll road system. It provides Woodford County residents with easy access to all major interstate and parkway systems to the west of Versailles. Woodford County is served by a full interchange at KY 33 just south of Versailles' urban service boundary limits. The full interchange was completed in 1992. The Parkway has an "AA" rating as a trucking highway with a 62,000 pound gross load limit.

Falling Springs Boulevard (KY 2113), was constructed in the early 2000's and accepted as a state road in April 2004. It was designed to link Troy Pike (KY 33) to Tyrone Pike (US 62) with the focus of reducing truck movements and traffic congestion through downtown Versailles. This has reduced truck traffic headed to the south and west side of Versailles (location of the OSRAM facility).

## **B. LOCAL, STATE and FEDERAL**

The system of roadways serving Woodford County and the Bluegrass Region is divided, for administrative and maintenance purposes, into several classifications. There are local streets that fall within the jurisdiction of the cities of Versailles and Midway. The next level includes all designated County roads for which the Woodford County Fiscal Court is responsible. In addition to these locally guided administrative classifications, there are State roads managed through the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, as well as Federal and Interstate System roadways.

Woodford County is not included as a part of a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), although its neighbors Fayette County and Jessamine County are. The MPO is an administrative creation of the Federal Highway Administration, designed to coordinate a myriad of agencies involved with transportation planning and funding within urbanized areas. Without this designation, Woodford County is dependent on the State Transportation Cabinet through its District Office for planning and funding support limited primarily to State administered roadways.

At the County level, the County Road Department has on staff a registered Engineer. The County Engineer, in addition to supervising the County Road Department staff consisting of 19 full time employees, assists in the review and approval of new subdivision plats and construction plans including the design and construction of new roads and water and sewer facilities in the County. There are currently 151.3 centerline miles of roads maintained by the County Road Department. This includes pavement maintenance, bridge and culvert maintenance, snow removal, striping, roadside maintenance including tree removal, road signage repair and replacement, storm debris removal, and other tasks directed by the Fiscal Court. All new roads built as a part of new development in the unincorporated areas of the County (except for the private roads built in conjunction with Rural Residential developments) are constructed according to the County road standards found in the Subdivision Regulations. The Road Department staff also uses new construction standards as a means to prioritize improvements required to bring existing

County roads up to current safety standards, which includes bridge replacements and widening roads.

### **Functional Classification of Highways**

Functional (highway) classification is a method for classifying roadways according to their function. It is a hierarchical system in which streets and highways are grouped into classes or systems according to the character of service they were designed to provide. These facilities are typically planned and constructed by Federal or State authorities. Lower classifications, such as collectors, are typically administered at the County or local level and provide access to neighborhoods, shopping areas and workplaces.

Figure 14 depicts roads in Woodford County that have been functionally classified. Classifications range from Rural Interstate to Urban Minor Arterial and Rural Minor Collector. The “urban” or “rural” designation indicates what type of area the road passes through, and design standards for intersection spacing, drainage, design speed and other road characteristics vary based on whether the area is urban or rural. The data on which Figure 14 is based was developed for the 1997 Comprehensive Plan and the classifications are current. Provided below is a general definition of each classification.

**Interstate Highway** – Fully controlled access facilities with high speeds or design criteria, including federal interstate and state parkway systems.

**Urban/Rural Principal Arterials** – Serves corridor movements with trip length and travel characteristics indicative of statewide or interstate travel.

**Urban/Rural Major Collectors** – Routes serving inter-county travel rather than statewide travel with speeds less than arterial routes.

**Urban/Rural Minor Collectors** – Roads that provide access to adjacent land and provide service to travel over relatively short distances.

In addition to the use of urban and rural designations to distinguish the types of areas through which a highway passes, there is one other designation – scenic. The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991 established a Scenic Byways Advisory Committee to develop a national scenic byways program. The Act encourages individual states to institute state scenic byways programs. To this end, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) has developed and implemented a state program.

A scenic highway or byway has roadsides or a viewshed<sup>1</sup> of aesthetic, cultural, historical, and/or archaeological value worthy of preservation, restoration, protection, and enhancement. When a road or portion of a road is designated by the KTC as a scenic highway or byway the Cabinet is only designating the actual roadway and the associated declared right-of-way. The designation does not affect the level of maintenance or the agency responsible for maintenance. Also, there is no special funding associated with the designation of a road as a scenic route. Three state roads in Woodford County have been designated as scenic byways. These include Old Frankfort Pike (KY 1681), Pisgah Pike

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<sup>1</sup> A viewshed encompasses a physical area that can be “viewed” or visible from, in this case, a road. There are viewsheds associated with rivers, walking paths, and other modes of transportation.

(KY 1967) and Midway Road (US 62) between Versailles and Midway. The physical extent of the designations is also depicted on Figure 14.

In addition to these state designated scenic highways, Woodford County also protects the US 60 corridor north and south of Versailles in the Rural Service Area through a 500 foot scenic viewshed corridor along both sides of the road right-of-way outside of the Urban Service Area on lands zoned Agricultural. These scenic viewsheds are also located on corridors leading into Midway on Midway Road (US 62), Leestown Road (US 421), Georgetown Road (KY 341) and Weisenberger Mill Road.

The scenic designation is important not only for transportation purposes but also for access management and future land use. One aspect of viewshed protection often overlooked is the management of type and location of access points within the roadway corridor. This element of viewshed protection should be taken into account in preparing long-range transportation plans. It is important in transportation planning to carefully coordinate the location of future access points with identified and mapped scenic vistas and cultural landscapes. The location of such access points will also influence how and where future development occurs within the corridor.

## C. TRANSPORTATION STUDIES

Over the past twelve years there have been three transportation studies completed in Woodford County. The first study Versailles-Midway-Woodford County Year 2020 Transportation Plan – May 1999, was completed as a result of a recommendation from the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. The 1997 Plan recognized the need to get better details on the County's transportation system. Such a "system" would help to: preserve the traffic carrying capacity of arterials and collectors; provide alternative routes that may help to shorten trips or travel time thus resulting in fewer vehicle miles of travel and reduction of automobile related air pollution; and, encourage a greater connectivity between neighborhoods, shopping areas, workplaces and civic uses. Specifically, one of the 1997 Plan recommendations read, "*The interconnection of local and collector streets between existing and proposed residential and non-residential development will facilitate traffic movement throughout the USB [Urban Service Boundary] areas, without having to access major arterials. For instance, traffic congestion in the Versailles central business district could be lessened, if residential traffic could travel around the downtown to reach their destinations.*"

### **Versailles-Midway-Woodford County Year 2020 Transportation Plan**

The 1999 Study provided details on the local transportation system and then developed an implementation schedule for any recommended improvements. It was a very "broad-brush" review at how to address current and future traffic volumes on local, county and state roadways. It looked at the Falling Springs Boulevard (future road at that time), Hunteartown Road corridor, and traffic accident records for Versailles. One major concern raised through public forums was regarding lack of connectivity which caused congestion in downtown Versailles and increased traffic on city streets which were never designed for cut through traffic. As a result, many of the recommendations were for a transportation system extending existing roadways, widening existing roadways and

constructing new ones. All of the recommendations were divided into two groups and are as follows:

*Proposed Safety and Spot Improvements*

A number of improvements were proposed for the transportation system in Versailles. Safety and spot improvements on local and county roads, as well as state and federal roads within Versailles are listed as follows:

- Project 1. Construct Pedestrian/Bike Path between City and County Parks
- Project 2. Add Pavement Striping to Rural Sections
- Project 3. Extend Paddock Place to meet KY 33
- Project 4. General Rural Local Road Improvements
- Project 5. Extend Crossfield Drive to meet Laval Heights
- Project 6. Extend McDavid Drive to meet Bryanwood Road
- Project 7. Widen Huntertown Road from downtown Versailles to the BG Parkway
- Project 8. General Rural Local Road Improvements
- Project 9. Extend Briarwood Road to meet Shannon Run
- Project 10. Widen Huntertown Road from the BG Parkway to US 60
- Project 11. General Rural Local Road Improvements

*Proposed Major Highway Improvements*

Major highway improvements are also proposed along local and county roads as well as state and federal roads as part of the Study. These are as follows:

- Project 1. Construct Northwest Connector Route between US 62 and US 60
- Project 2. Consider Ordinance to Prevent Through-Trucks along Urban US 60
- Project 3. Reconstruct Intersection of Huntertown Road and US 60
- Project 4. Widen US 62 from Main Street to the County Park
- Project 5. Reconstruct US 62 and KY 1964 Intersection
- Project 6. Reconstruct the Commercial Section of US 60
- Project 7. Reconstruct US 60 and US 60 Bypass Intersection (east of Versailles)
- Project 8. Widen US 60 to Six Lanes from the Bluegrass Parkway to Fayette County
- Project 9. Reconstruct Intersection of Pisgah Pike and US 60
- Project 10. Reconstruct Five-Leg Intersection (northwest side of Versailles)
- Project 11. Upgrade Downtown Versailles Traffic Signals

**Community and Transportation System Plan for Southern Versailles**

The second study, Community and Transportation System Plan for Southern Versailles – January 2002, was a follow-up to the first one. Southern Versailles is where many established neighborhoods were located as well as where future growth was planned to occur, including residential, commercial and professional office. This Study looked in more detail at the following: Improving the Efficiency of the Transportation System,

Reducing the Impacts of Transportation on the Environment, Reducing the Need for Costly Public Infrastructure, Ensuring Efficient Access to Jobs, Services and Centers of Trade, and finally, Encouraging Private Sector Development Patterns. Four study areas were identified and recommendations were made for each of these areas. The four areas were as follows:

- The Lexington Road Corridor (Eastern Gateway)
- The Clifton Road/Tyrone Pike Intersection (Western Gateway)
- The US 62/KY 33 Connector Corridor
- The Huntertown Road Corridor

### **Northwest Versailles Mobility Study**

Finally, the third transportation study, Northwest Versailles Mobility Study, April 2010 was initiated by the City of Versailles. This Northwest Study was done at the request of the City of Versailles to address public concerns about peak hour traffic congestion in downtown Versailles, especially its impact on businesses, residents, the environment, and the overall “quality of life” for people who live and work in Versailles and Woodford County. The Study focused on developing strategies to improve transportation in the northwest part of the community, including the downtown area. Four key issues were noted as follows:

- Lack of connectivity in the northwest area of Versailles
- Regional growth that will increase external travel into, out of, and through Woodford County
- Placing a focus on mobility (the ability to move people and goods) and not on solely increasing transportation system capacity
- Creating community-based solutions through consensus-building

Nine recommended Mobility Solutions evolved out of the Study. These recommendations were made by the consultant with considerable input from a Steering Committee as well as the general public. The recommendations are as follows:

- Downtown Traffic System Improvements including optimization of signal timing, limited removal of on-street parking spaces, and enlarging overhead directional signs
- Further Analysis of Northwest Connector including alternative alignments and directions
- Flashing Warning Beacons on US 60 at the Blue Grass Parkway
- Truck Signing at Blue Grass Parkway Exit 59
- Intersection Improvements at Main Street/North Main Street/Frankfort Street/Broadway/Elm Street
- Intersection Improvements at Clifton Road/Tyrone Pike/Rose Hill Avenue
- Cedar Ridge Lane Extension
- Neighborhood connectivity
- US 60 Bypass/Markham Drive Intersection Improvements

## D. FUTURE RECOMMENDED STATE HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) has a long range plan for state roads. In order for the KTC to construct roads they have to be on the Six-Year Highway Plan. This Plan is then narrowed to a Biennial Report. The 2010-2012 KTC Biennial Report for recommended State Highway Improvements in Woodford County can be found in the following table.

**Table 52**  
**Summary of KTC Six Year Highway Plan -Biennial Report**  
**FY-2010 thru FY-2012– Woodford Co.**

Recommended Highway Improvements	Length	Cost	Scheduling Information
Northwest Versailles Mobility Corridor		\$500,000	D 2012
US 60 – Pavement Rehab on US 60 from the Franklin Co Line to US -60X in Versailles	9.400	2,290,000	C 2010
KY 1659 – Replace the McCracken Pike Bridge on Millville Road	0.040	\$250,000	C 2011
CR 1015 – Replace the Weisenberger Mill Road Bridge at the Woodford/Scott Co Line	0.023	\$750,000	C 2011

Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Six Year Plan, Biennial Report, 2010 – 2012.

## E. PEDESTRIANS and BICYCLISTS

When it comes to setting priorities, the automobile has been top in the transportation business for the last 100 years. While most people couldn't maintain current lifestyles without the automobile, it should be noted that there are a sizable number of people who are either too young to drive, do not have the funds to own and maintain an auto, or are too old to drive, that may utilize walking or bicycling as a means of transportation. The increase in cost of fuel due to the economy and civil unrest overseas is also impacting the use of automobiles and increasing interest in walking and bicycling.

In days gone by in many communities, sidewalks were an expected feature. They were used to walk to work, to church or synagogue and to school. They were even used for recreation and socialization. This changed as society spread out, geographically, and as a result people began to depend more and more on the automobile for all the trips and functions that walking and bicycling had previously provided. This change meant that

sidewalks (and bike paths) were no longer considered an important element of civic infrastructure.

Local governments are responsible for civic infrastructure (meaning sidewalks and bike paths) that connects neighborhoods, schools, workplaces, shopping districts and recreation areas. This responsibility is usually accomplished with facilities along arterial and collector roads and within non-roadway corridors such as greenways and parks.

Developers are responsible for civic infrastructure that connects the internal elements of neighborhoods, shopping districts, offices, etc, and which also connects that neighborhood or office to the larger civic system that government is responsible for.

Neighborhoods and Associations (Main Street Association, Neighborhood Associations, School Board, etc.) are responsible for retrofitting areas with missing or deteriorated elements of civic infrastructure (that are not a part of the government's responsibilities).

### **Existing and Planned Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**

At present, there are several existing pedestrian and bicycle facilities in and around Versailles. The first is a Multi-Use Path that parallels Falling Springs Boulevard (KY 2113) linking Troy Pike (US 33) to Tyrone Pike (US 62). This is an 8-foot wide multi-use path that was constructed as part of Falling Springs Boulevard facility. The second facility is the 8-foot wide multi-use path constructed from Big Spring Park to Falling Spring Park. This was constructed with funds from an ISTE A grant the Fiscal Court received. The third is a sidewalk extension along South Main Street (KY 33) done by the City of Versailles to link Gormley Drive to Dry Ridge Road at Falling Springs Boulevard. Finally, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet added bicycle lanes along Lexington Street and South Main Street.

Planned facilities are identified on Figure 15. All of these planned improvements were identified as a result of the 2020 Transportation Plan and the Community and Transportation System Plan for Southern Versailles. Each of these proposals is briefly described below.

**Multi-Use Recreational Path – Huntertown Road:** This project would result in a continuous multi-use path along Huntertown Road from US 60 (east of the Bluegrass Parkway) to Equestrian Park (formerly Woodford Middle School) – a distance of almost five miles. Huntertown Road north of the Bluegrass Parkway is the location of two schools and the focus of several new residential subdivisions and this path would become the core pedestrian/bicycle route for eastern Versailles.

**Pedestrian Link – Connecting Oxford Drive to US 62/KY 33 Connector's Multi-Use Path:** The addition of a four foot wide pedestrian path connection between Oxford Road and the Falling Springs Boulevard multi-use path (approximately 200 feet long) will make a convenient linkage between two pedestrian networks – one internal to subdivisions in the area and one connecting with Falling Springs Park and Downtown.

**Pedestrian Link – Connecting Main Street to Huntertown Road via School Properties:** The addition of an eight-foot wide multi-use path between South Main Street (KY 33) and Huntertown Road will make an important linkage between neighborhoods and schools. The proposed corridor is located entirely within school properties – Southside School and Huntertown School.

**Sidewalk Additions – Tyrone Pike:** This planned five foot sidewalk improvement (4,730 linear feet) would be constructed between Elizabeth Street and Falling Springs Park. Currently, there are no pedestrian facilities in this heavily traveled (auto) corridor and the proposal would provide a safe means of traveling from adjoining neighborhoods to the Simmons Elementary School, Downtown and Falling Springs Park. This project was funded by the same ISTEA grant previously noted.

The cumulative effect of these existing and planned improvements, as shown on Figure 15, clearly demonstrates a community supported bicycle and pedestrian plan for southern Versailles – and the role that local government can play in creating a viable system.

### Regulatory Provisions for Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

The responsibility for implementing this type of improvement falls to the developers of Woodford County's neighborhoods, businesses and industrial properties. The requirements are set forth in the Subdivision Regulations which require a minimum of 4 foot wide sidewalks on both sides of all streets in new subdivisions.

### Linkages - Heritage Based Tourism, Intra-County Travel

A component of bicycle and pedestrian planning that is often overlooked is the benefit to be derived from improvements that help to promote economic development, tourism/preservation, and connections between communities. The focus has been primarily upon the Urban Service Area of Versailles, and providing connections between neighborhoods, schools and downtown.

There are several other aspects of Woodford County that could be further explored in terms of Bicycle and Pedestrian access. For example, the US 62 corridor between Versailles and Midway may represent an opportunity for a multi-use path to promote: an additional connection between the two primary Woodford cities; the scenic and agricultural heritage of the County; and possibly, agri- tourism opportunities. One such pathway could be the former railroad line that connected these two urban areas.

Another example of making multi-purpose connections is the potential to extend a multi-use path along US 60 west to the Pisgah Historic District. Not only could this path serve to promote tourism in Woodford County, it would connect existing neighborhoods, churches and other uses to shopping opportunities in Versailles.

## F. OTHER FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION

In addition to the road and street circulation systems of Versailles, Midway and Woodford County, several other transportation systems and facilities must also be addressed in analyzing the complete transportation system. These additional systems include rail, waterways, airport, and public transportation.

### Rail

There are currently 15 miles of short line railroad in Woodford County known as the Versailles Line operated by R. J. Corman Railroad Company. Heading west this line connects with Frankfort, Shelbyville and Louisville at Anchorage. Heading east the line

goes to Lexington and on to Winchester where it interchanges with CSX. The Versailles Lines are used primarily for freight service to local industries such as Osram Sylvania and Quad Graphics.

Corman actually owns both track and land for 6.5 miles on the Versailles Line. In Midway they own 9.5 miles of track and lease the land/right of way from CSX. Corman is in the process of adding a rail siding in downtown Midway that will accommodate approximately 8 rail cars. This siding will give their operations flexibility for operating freight trains with occasional business trains and this will also allow Ole' Smokey steam engine to visit Midway. According to a Corman representative, "As for the prospect of operating an excursion or dinner train on a regular basis, we still do not have formal plans. We do share optimism with many in the area that we will one day be able to make a business case to justify the safe and affordable operation of an exciting excursion train. Midway seems a natural destination as it is already an appealing and picturesque town. And, it is the right distance from Lexington for a manageable roundtrip."

### **Waterways**

The Kentucky River is considered navigable and is primarily used by recreational boaters for pleasure boating, canoeing & kayaking and fishing. Approximately 40 miles of the Kentucky River form the western boundary of Woodford County and there are two dams, Kentucky River Dam 5 and Kentucky River Dam 6, along this part of the river. These dams do not have functioning navigation locks that provide navigation past the dams. The lower stretch of river, downstream of Dam 5, can be accessed at three public boat ramps in Frankfort (Franklin County) and one private ramp in Clifton. The pool between Dam 5 and Dam 6 can be accessed at one public ramp in Tyrone (Anderson County). The pool above Dam 6 can be accessed at public ramps at Oregon Road (Mercer County) and Cummins Ferry. There is one docking facility/marina located upstream of Dam 6 named Cummins Ferry Marina (Mercer County). Kentucky River Locks and Dams 1 through 4 are located downstream from Woodford County and potentially provide uninterrupted boating access from the Ohio River up to Dam 5. However, Lock 4 is currently the only functioning lock in the system. These locks are owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and they are managed by the Kentucky River Authority. The Kentucky River Authority anticipates rehabilitating Locks 1 through 4 and operating the locks for recreational boating during summer weekends (Typically Memorial Day through Labor Day). In Woodford County the Kentucky River is accessible via a public boat ramp at the end of Cummins Ferry Road in Nonesuch.

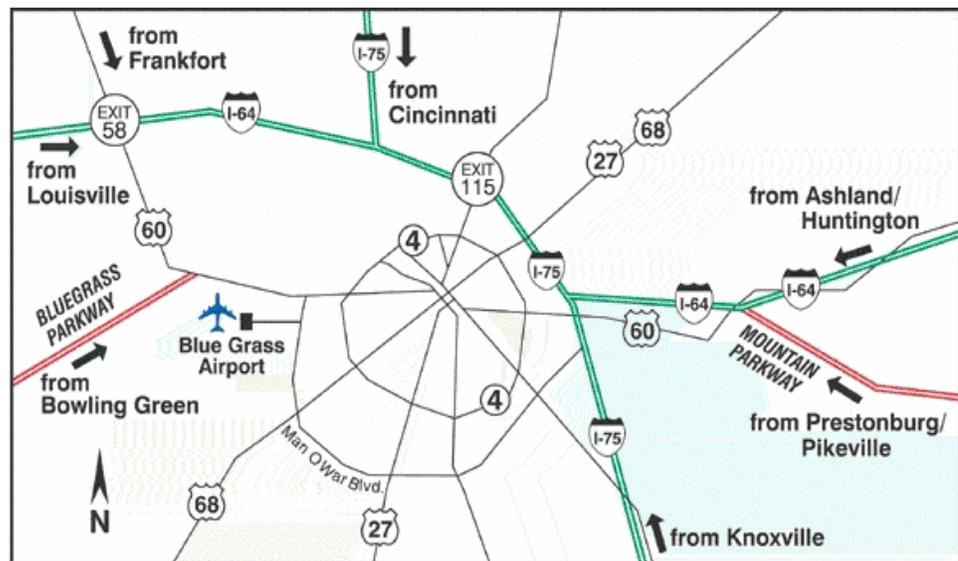
### **Air Transportation**

There are no public or private airports within Woodford County. The nearest scheduled commercial airline service is located at the Blue Grass Airport, which is four miles west of Lexington on US 60 and approximately 8 miles east of Versailles. The Airport was established in 1940 on about 500 acres of land. Today it occupies approximately 1,000 acres. It offers commercial flights to destinations all over the world and also provides a variety of corporate and general aviation services including U.S. Customs cargo inspections, flight instruction, charter aircraft, airplane maintenance, aircraft storage and more.

Last year the Blue Grass Airport underwent a number of major facility improvements designed to accommodate additional carriers and service to new markets. This 66 million dollar project included a new Runway 9-27. This new runway parallels US 60 and is 4,000 feet long. The airport's other existing runway, 4-22 is 7,000 feet long and supports commercial and general aviation traffic.

Commercial airline service is also available at Louisville International Airport, approximately 65 miles northwest of Versailles in Louisville, and at the Greater Cincinnati Airport, whose location is in northern Kentucky, approximately 80 miles north of Versailles.

The proximity of the Airport to Woodford County is certainly a plus in terms of business access to other markets as well as freight handling capabilities. This opportunity should be considered in terms of the potential to support industry, commerce, agriculture and tourism in Woodford.



Graphic illustration of Bluegrass Region and location of the Blue Grass Airport relative to Lexington

**Public Transportation**

The County and the cities of Versailles and Midway do not operate local public transportation systems of any type. There are no longer any private taxi companies in Woodford County, but service is available from surrounding cities. There is a private Community Transportation bus for Senior Citizens and qualifying disabled citizens. Private bus carriers do not provide direct service to Woodford County. However, Greyhound bus service is available through Lexington or Louisville.

