

Preserving
Town & Country
in the Woodford County Bluegrass



May 2001

"Preserving Town & Country"
is a master plan created under the direction
of the
Woodford County Task Force,
with the support and participation
of innumerable Woodford Countians.

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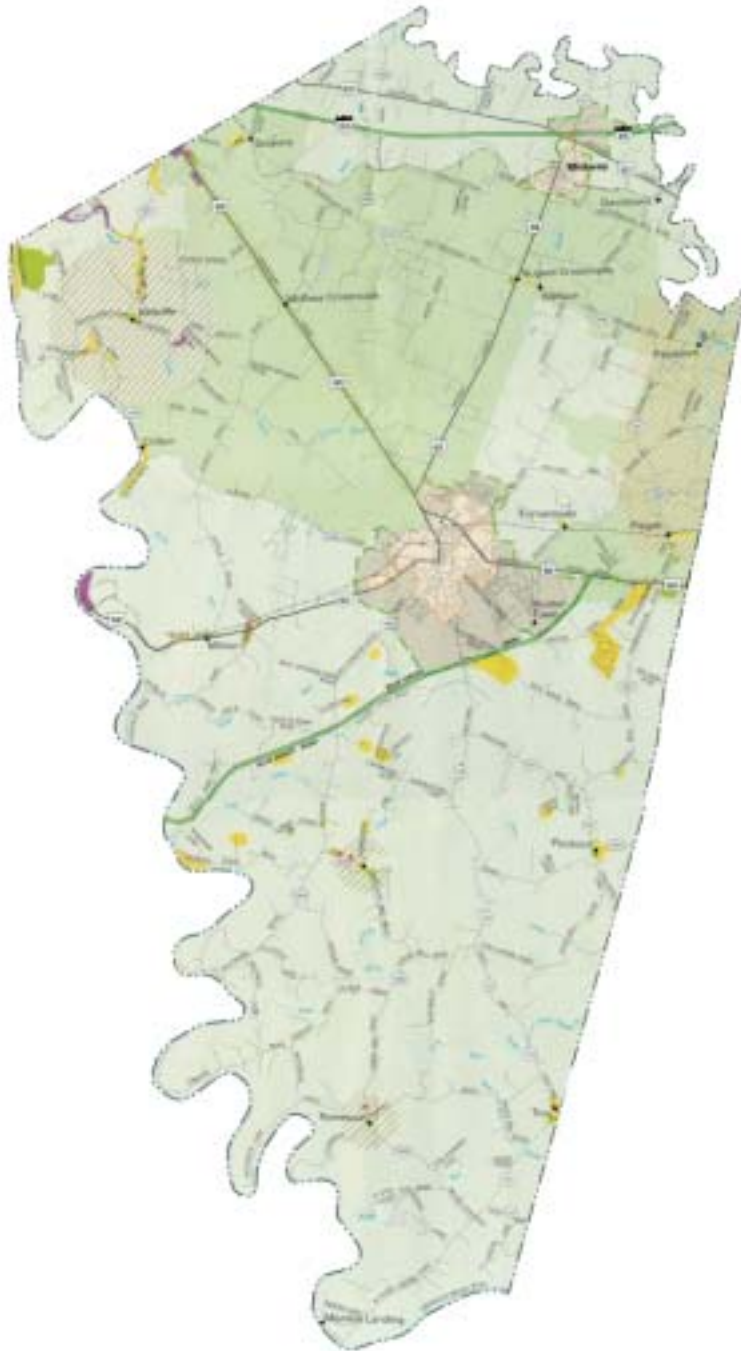


Table of Contents

Time to Decide	1
Downtown	2
Lexington Street	3
Uptown	4
Rural Woodford County	5
Implementation	6



Woodford County is changing. What shall it become?

Like other counties in the Bluegrass region, Woodford is redefining itself to remain economically viable and at the same time a desirable place to live and work. This historic place offers a spectrum of ways and places to live, from the blend of urban life and small town charm in Versailles to the quiet rural communities such as Mortonsville. The Bluegrass beauty and lifestyle continues to attract more people to the area, but this growth pressure in turn makes inevitable the need to shape that growth positively.



Whose Side Are You On?

In recent decades, a battle has been waged in Woodford County between two entrenched camps, one decisively pro-growth and the other against it, period.

The unmistakable evidence, the development already built, creates an impression, shared by many in the no-growth camp, that growth automatically makes things worse. Who can blame them for this reaction? Almost all of the postwar development in the region has been built without regard for livability, the quality of the place, or the town-building traditions found throughout the Bluegrass. Conventional suburban sprawl has been eroding the character and setting that attracted families and investment to the region in the first place. It is transforming large stretches of this unique landscape into banal strip shopping centers and undistinguished subdivisions, adding traffic, and harming historic settlements in the process. This has given rise to the understandable, reflexive conclusion that all future growth is bad. Therefore a lot of local energy has been focused on finding ways of hindering growth, and of stopping developers, rather than arriving at creative solutions under which growth can occur in a responsible way. This exhausting approach is neither sustainable, fair, nor affordable. Many pro-growth advocates point to the need for economic vitality, employment, tax base stability, respect for the rights of

The Geography of Nowhere

Eighty percent of everything ever built in America has been built in the last fifty years, and most of it is depressing, brutal, ugly, unhealthy, and spiritually degrading— the jive-plastic commuter tract home wastelands, the Potemkin village shopping plazas with their vast parking lagoons, the Lego-block hotel complexes, the “gourmet mansardic” junk-food joints, the Orwellian office “parks” featuring buildings sheathed in the same reflective glass as the sunglasses worn by chain-gang guards, the particle-board garden apartments rising up in every meadow and cornfield, the freeway loops around every big and little city with their clusters of discount merchandise marts, the whole destructive, wasteful, toxic, agoraphobia-inducing spectacle...

The newspaper headlines may shout about global warming, extinction of living species, the devastation of rain forests, and other world-wide catastrophes, but Americans evince a striking complacency when it comes to their everyday environment and the growing calamity that it represents...

Suburban streets invariably debouch into collector roads— that is, highways... If the housing developments in the area have been in place for more than ten years, then it is likely that the collector roads will have accumulated a hodge-podge of businesses: little shopping plazas, convenience stores, muffler shops, plus a full complement of fast-food emporiums...

Here there is no pretense of being a place for pedestrians. The motorist is in sole possession of the road. No cars are parked along the edge of the road to act as a buffer because they would clutter up a lane that might otherwise be used by moving traffic, and anyway, each business has its own individual parking lagoon. Each lagoon has a curb cut, or two, which behaves in practice like an intersection, with cars entering and leaving at a right angle to the stream of traffic, greatly increasing the possibility of trouble. There are no sidewalks out here along the collector road for many of the same reasons as back in the housing developments— too expensive, and who will maintain them?— plus the assumption that nobody in their right mind would ever come here on foot

Of course, one could scarcely conceive of an environment more hostile to pedestrians. It is a terrible place to be, offering no sensual or spiritual rewards. In fact, the overall ambience is one of assault on the senses. No one who could avoid it would want to be on foot [here]... Any adult between eighteen and sixty-five walking along one would instantly fall under suspicion of being less than a good citizen.

Try to imagine a building of any dignity surrounded by six acres of parked cars. The problems are obvious. Obvious solution: Build buildings without dignity. This is precisely the outcome in ten thousand highway strips across the land: boulevards so horrible that every trace of human aspiration seems to have been expelled, except the impetus to sell. It has made commerce itself appear to be obscene. Traveling a commercial highway surrounded by other motorists, assaulted by a chaos of gigantic, lurid plastic signs, golden arches, red-and-white striped revolving chicken buckets, cinder-block carpet warehouses, discount marts, asphalt deserts, and a horizon slashed by utility poles, one can forget that commerce ever took place in dignified surroundings.

—Excerpted from **The Geography of Nowhere** by James Howard Kunstler
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property owners, and accommodation of the demand for housing and workplaces, but they do not sufficiently distinguish between one type of growth or another. This is a far cry from the discerning vision of the American leaders and developers who originally founded fine towns like Versailles. Developers were once the heroes of their communities. These were careful developers of real neighborhoods with high aspirations. The cherished heart of old Versailles exhibits the design conventions they followed to make lasting human settlements.

Government policy has confusing impacts on the debate as well. Officially, the County has endorsed a controlled-development philosophy in its Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinances and Subdivision Regulations. Meanwhile, the state and federal governments have funded and built road-widenings, highway bypasses and other auto-oriented infrastructure projects that add powerful fuel to sprawl, essentially urging on developers.

It has become clear that “pro-growth versus no-growth” is a false choice, and nobody wins. Nobody likes the protracted court fights. Few Woodford Countians, on either side, express enthusiasm for the unmemorable developments that do squeeze through, albeit more slowly. Developers maintain that if the community would be clear about what they will accept, the industry will deliver it.

A Better Way: Good Growth

There is a third alternative: growth on the community's terms. Growth that makes things better rather than worse, that makes sense for developers, and that is coupled with a long-term preservation strategy *is* achievable.

This Plan rejects the old pro-growth versus no-growth dichotomy. This Plan is about *good growth*.

The Process



The community working together at tables

The debate about growth in Woodford County has moved at last to a solutions-oriented stage with the process that created this Plan. In 1999, the Woodford County Task Force was created and empowered through the Fiscal Courts and Versailles City Council to set goals for positive community growth and undertook a public process that epitomizes the new cooperative spirit in the community.

In May 2000, this Plan was created through an intense design event, called a “charrette.” Over the course of seven days, a series of hands-on workshops were held with the community and a team of design professionals. The team was led by town planners Dover, Kohl & Partners and assisted by Ferrell-Rutherford Associates. Community participants included property owners, neighbors, business people, developers, members of the Fiscal Court, the City Councils, the Task Force, the Planning and Zoning Commission, County staff and others. In this charrette, the participants worked to plan the more urban center of Versailles (both the existing downtown and emerging “uptown”) as well as the rural community of Mortonville.

Two special sessions were held on separate days, one focused particularly on Versailles and the other on Mortonville. Each of these events began with a presentation on traditional neighborhoods and basic urban design principles. The long-established neighborhoods of Woodford County were examined and compared to conventional subdivisions and



peer communities around the nation. The presentations focused on the physical qualities that are important to foster true neighborhoods and a strong sense of community.

Citizens then began designing. More than 100 people at each table session, armed with markers and pencils, gathered around tables, rolled up their sleeves, and drew their ideas on large maps. Later in the day, a spokesperson from each table presented their main ideas to the larger group. Surveys were also distributed asking the community for further input, and a website was established for communication about the Plan.

Throughout the remainder of the week, meetings and interviews were held to gather more information. Several “pin-up” reviews of initial ideas were held as the work progressed. The designers combined all the input from the various meetings into a single plan for Versailles and for Mortonsville. A work-in-progress draft of the two master plans was presented for further input at the close of the charrette, using extensive visuals and examining both “big picture” ideas and technical issues.

Based on the input of the community and the direction of the Woodford County Task Force, this report represents a synthesis of the community’s desires and good planning practice. The final plan and design illustrations incorporate refinements made since the charrette.

Different Areas, Different Strategies

Strong Opinions

There were many recurring themes that threaded through the citizen participants' comments. Memorable quotes from these conversations include:

- “Save the farmland”
- “Protect the sense of place & history and uniqueness”
- “No-mega-boxes”
- “I want a town center for sitting, walking, socializing”
- “No big 'sea-of-asphalt' parking lots”
- “When green space is gone, it's gone forever”
- “Discount prices aren't everything”
- “Let's not be like Anywhere USA”
- “Promote arts & culture downtown”
- “I would like to be able to walk or ride a bike around”
- “I want my children to want to stay here”

The Main Ideas

As a result of the information gathering, several principles emerged:

1. Revitalize Downtown
2. Build & Restore Real Neighborhoods
3. Transform the Auto-Oriented Strip
4. Revive Yet Protect Small Communities

This report is divided into chapters that detail the physical areas of the Plan and strategies in four areas of Woodford County. Each chapter contains illustrations of the design details for the plan followed by policy statements and explanations. The four areas are:

- Downtown Versailles:** Revitalize and fine-tune the historic fabric
- Lexington Street:** Transform the auto-oriented strip
- Uptown:** Redevelop Versailles Center with mixed-use neighborhoods
- Mortonsville:** Re-establish strong rural communities

A national model for vitality, preservation, and livability can be established in this exceptional place through investment, cooperation and persistence.



Downtown



Lexington Street



Uptown



Mortonsville



Downtown

Lexington Street



- Civic Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings



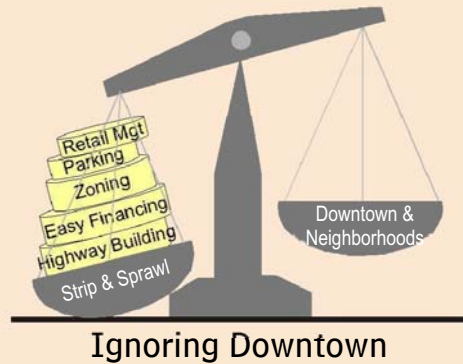
Uptown

Downtown



Downtown Versailles is anchored at the intersection of Main Street and US 60 and spreads north and south for a few blocks in either direction. Churches and other civic buildings line the streets and impart a feeling of reverence and permanence. The architecture is exceptional and there is tremendous potential for re-establishing a thriving main street environment and robust surrounding neighborhoods. Historically, Downtown was a center of commerce, housing and civic activities. As automobile use increased, population spread out, and highways were built, stores and offices moved out along US 60 to take advantage of road improvements and abundant land available for parking.

Downtown vs. The Highway



Understanding the effect of commercial development along US 60 and the Bypass is key. A strategy for revitalizing and encouraging development downtown must then take into account the retail advantages strip commercial often has:

- common management regulates the mix of tenants and maintains the property
- readily available parking is perceived as a convenience
- existing zoning encourages strip development while impeding downtown redevelopment
- easy financing in the mortgage system currently encourages building at the edge
- highway-building redirects economic energy away from downtown

Creating the Downtown Advantage

Downtown Versailles has suffered from a pattern seen in many other downtowns across the country: market share has been lost to a nearby commercial strip because of unfair competition.

The contemporary strip sprang from highway subsidy, cheaper land, and a host of government policies (including zoning) that promoted sprawl and auto-oriented development. These factors, combined with unsound urban renewal practices which further weakened downtowns, created advantages that seem to give the strip an edge: lots of passersby and loud buildings to lure them, low rents, easy financing for development, and plenty of land for convenient parking. The shopping centers further leveraged their large scale with common management, control of tenant mix, and coordination between tenants.

In the typical pattern seen in the late twentieth century, local retail gradually abandoned downtown to a large extent and relocated to the strip-mall or succumbed to national chains in malls. Housing inventories in downtown declined, depriving merchants and restaurants of their traditional customer base. Office uses and service businesses, in search of low rent, began to take over once-prominent retail locations on the main street. Historic buildings were bulldozed for parking or left to fall down on their own, eroding the street scene and the sense of place.

But throughout the country, there are now many downtowns that are beating the strip and the mall at their own game. For example, Park Avenue in Winter Park, Florida; Downtown West Palm Beach, Florida; and Downtown Franklin, Tennessee. The lesson gleaned from these examples is that Downtown can compete with outlying commercial development if the playing field is leveled and if downtown leaders and merchants always keep the competition's advantages and disadvantages in mind.



In the heart of Downtown Versailles, a vacant lot provides the space for strategic infill.



A mixed-use building containing an office, boutique or salon could be located on the street. The only difference on the outside might be the sign attached to the building.



Rowhouses are a versatile building type that allow for a variety of uses inside, without changing the character outside. Residences could line the first and second floors.

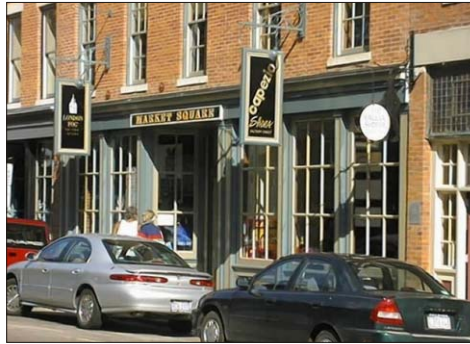
Part of what will make downtown Versailles successful is to add housing that will create a market. The new residents of downtown can support the surrounding stores and businesses.



Since the environment created supports the pedestrian, the additional 'traffic' generated by a change in use would be mitigated.

Adding a corner store can serve the needs of the immediate population and the community at large.

Main Street in Galena, Illinois is the center of this historic Community. The Main Street has experienced a renaissance in the last decade. It is the center of the community as well as a regional destination for tourism. Galena's success is in part to a very active Chamber of Commerce. (www.galenachamber.com)



Main Street in Jonesborough is one of the original settlements in Tennessee. The street is the center of the community, providing daily needs and services. It is also a regional destination for tourism. Jonesborough hosts a National Storytelling Festival annually, which is a tremendous economic draw for the City. (Storytellingfestival.net/festival99/historic.htm)



Park Avenue, in Winter Park Florida is affectionately referred to as the 'street that beat the mall'. This Main Street has historically performed well against nearby mall, that has been redeveloped as the new 'Uptown'. (www.ci.winter-park.fl.us)



In order to compete, Downtown businesses should apply some of the lessons learned at other modern retail and mixed-use developments. This begins with better coordination between the many merchants and owners. Getting organized is the starting point for competitiveness with the newer outlying development. (Note that this does not mean that Downtown should adopt a “mall mentality” or try to physically reconfigure itself to more closely resemble a strip mall!)

The downtown community can also be competitive by building upon the existing business framework. Creation of additional retail stores and restaurants is basic, although an extreme amount of new square footage is unnecessary. What is required is to re-establish a loyal following of customers, drawn from both nearby and outlying areas.

Downtown's greatest competitive advantage is to continue to foster a satisfying, people-friendly environment. To put it another way, the typical strip development today offers a bland, disagreeable experience: stressful traffic, ugly parking lots, homogenized chain stores, and buildings that seem plastic and fake. How did this happen? The developers of the recent past traded away the sense of place to get convenience and expedience, and tenants and customers responded. If the strip commercial pattern hadn't made money, the developers would have dropped the experiment.

But after a couple of generations of this pattern, however, there has emerged dissatisfaction with the results out on the strip: Woodford Countians mourn the decline of the town's overall charm and character, the weakening bonds of community, the loss of uniqueness, and above all the rise in traffic. There is also evidence of a newly sophisticated marketplace, in which discriminating customers demand a better *experience* when they shop or dine. Also, the hundreds of citizens who participated in creating this plan were adamant that revitalization of Downtown is among their primary goals.

Therefore the timing is excellent for re-establishing Downtown as a vibrant center, based on *its* prime competitive advantage, its charm and physical sense of place.

Making downtown a more pleasant place to walk is a basic aim. The resulting environment will be sought after by, among others, “New Economy” businesses and their employees.

A new road will help pedestrian and vehicular movement.

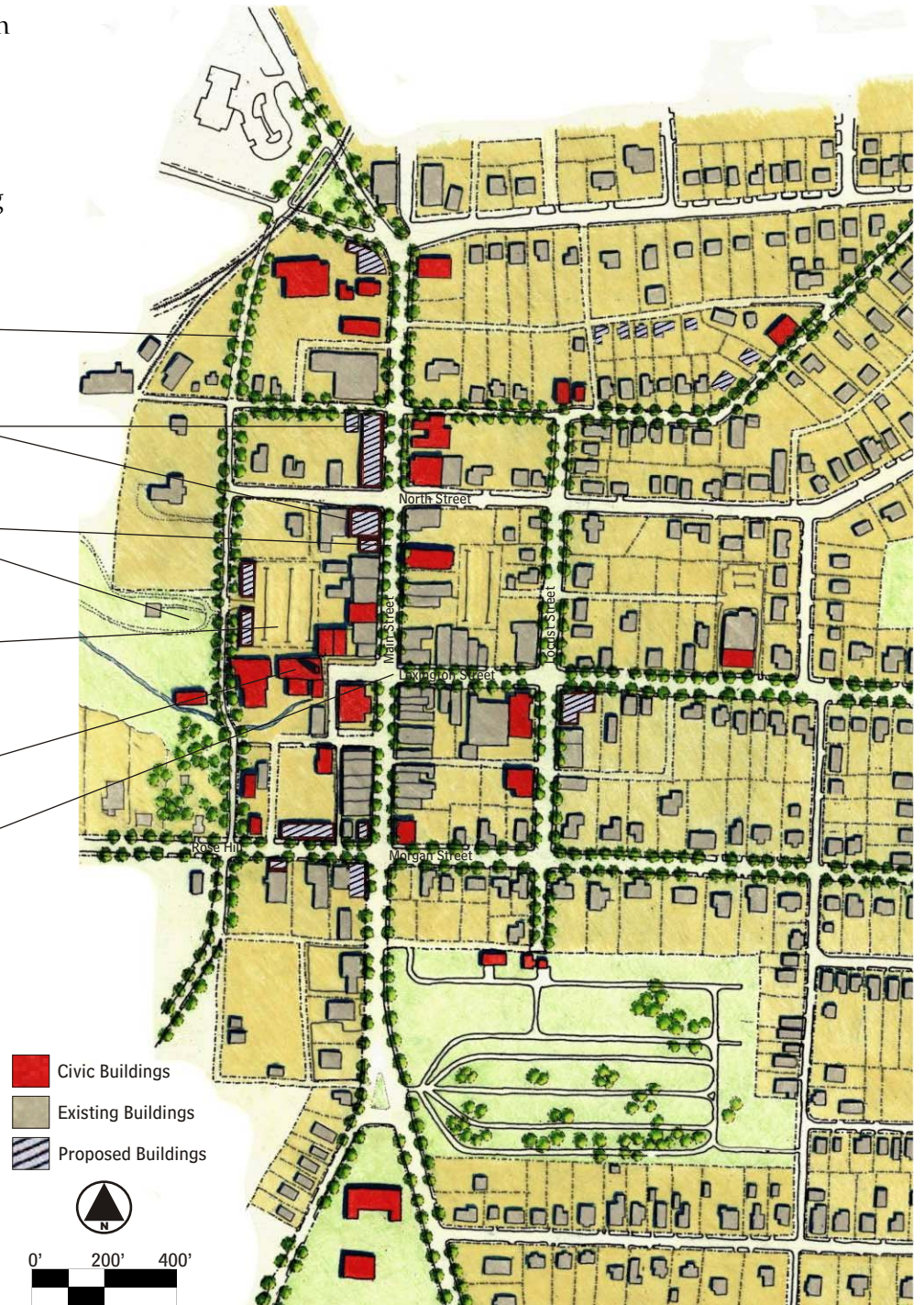
New buildings complete the street. They also provide opportunities for new homes, businesses and retail.

Adding street trees and landscaping will enhance the pedestrian experience.

Additional parking is provided behind buildings. Way-finding signage indicates parking throughout the Downtown.

Civic presence maintains the character of Downtown and ensures Downtown is a destination for the community.

Lexington Street is redeveloped as a safe, traffic calmed street.





Celebrate the corner with a tower element.

Add a cornice to define the building.

Add street trees.

Restore existing buildings.

Proposed

Windows provide natural surveillance, eyes on the street.

Expression Line adds architectural interests.

Awnings and Marquees

Plentiful Glass

Small Corner Radii calms traffic and enhances pedestrian



Wide sidewalks encourage pedestrian activity.

On-street parking is essential for healthy retail, the parked cars also create pedestrian safety.

Selective infill is a key ingredient for the success of Downtown Versailles. As an example, this site is presently a gas station, and while serving a function, it does little else than be a gas station. The proposed building could be offices, stores, or apartments, and provide much more to the vitality of Versailles. Since the buildings are close to the street and provide shade and shelter, the area encourages pedestrian activity.

The Downtown Strategy for Success

1. Provide more opportunities for living downtown. Add new buildings as identified in the Master Plan. Encouraging a balance of people living and working downtown has several benefits:

- Merchants benefit from people living downtown because they will frequent and support the local businesses;
- Living and working in the same area removes daily trips that rely on the regional road network;
- New housing downtown can provide a greater variety of housing options in Versailles.

2. Maintain the safety and appearance of downtown streets. Keep the physical details of Downtown attractive and clean. This is an indicator to the community and those wanting to invest that this is a cared-for place. These details include:

- Regular maintenance of trees, benches, lights, awnings and sidewalks;
- Adding and replacing street furniture and trees where needed;
- Pressure cleaning sidewalks; and
- Repainting or pressure cleaning buildings when necessary.

3. Keep the street well merchandised. Merchants should work together to keep Downtown interesting. Attractive shopfront windows have traditionally been a way to advertise and entice people to enter the store. The fronts of retail stores and restaurants should be welcoming; pedestrians should be able to see inside. Retail shops should frequently re-arrange their windows and merchandise to keep interest. Merchandise in the display windows should be well lit both during the day and at night when stores are closed.

4. Eliminate the perception of a parking shortage. Provide signage indicating the way to all locations of off-street parking. Promotional brochures for the downtown should point out the locations of all available off-street parking. Update and keep implementing the parking plan.

5. Set and promote common operating hours. Downtown merchants should agree on particular evenings to stay open later and advertise these hours. Eighty percent of all retail purchases occur during the workweek after 5:00 pm and on Sundays (source: Gibbs Planning Group). These are precisely the hours that most of the stores are not open downtown. Participation in the common-hours program can be voluntary, but should be required for any businesses or landlords that wish to take part in incentive programs, such as funding for façade improvements or tax incentives.

6. Promote 'best of kind' businesses. Celebrate businesses that allow people from outside to enjoy the things that you cherish. The major advantage downtown has over the strip development is that it can provide a unique retail environment with local products and services that major chain retailers cannot. For example, Woodford County Reserve bourbon is a local product that could be showcased.

7. Promote tourism around unique qualities of Downtown Versailles and Woodford County. Use tourism as a revenue-producing industry that generates funds to be spent on downtown revitalization, historic preservation and acquisition of rural lands. A study by Bluegrass Tomorrow indicates that Woodford County is only promoting itself 1/100 as much as neighboring counties. Much more can and should be done. Stories are told of how, in the past, Woodford Countians deliberately avoided marketing to outsiders. Downtown Versailles needs the spending power of visitors, though, and has paid a terrible price for that policy. The cash spent by tourists is vital to bolstering Main Street businesses, and complements the income from local customers. Woodford

County should develop a marketing plan to embrace tourism as a legitimate tool for accomplishing its goals and set about establishing a tourism market position based on quality, history, and local values.

8. Encourage more businesses downtown. Make tax incentives, loans, and grants available to merchants and business owners in the downtown in order to encourage people to start or expand businesses downtown (e.g. rent for \$1 a month, property tax deferrals, etc). Clearly there will be more sales and success downtown if a “critical mass” is generated.

9. Create development incentives and fix the regulations. Create new architectural and design standards that can accelerate the development approval process. Faster permitting of specific development types can encourage the desired type of development. Relieve downtown properties of any burdensome parking requirements, lot-size minimums, lot-coverage or setback requirements, and impediments to mixed uses, while holding downtown developers to higher design standards, such as build-to lines and glazing criteria. Adopt “smart building codes,” like those recently made law in Maryland and New Jersey, to make renovation of old buildings feasible.

10. Foster civic presence. Ensure that civic buildings and their activities remain downtown; these draw people to Downtown and keep it part of normal community life. The presence of numerous civic buildings also fosters the sense of place and the special character of Downtown Versailles. Take whatever steps necessary to discourage the departure of churches and government functions from Downtown.

11. Ensure confidence. Invest in a market study, if it is needed to prove the vitality of Main Street shopping in Versailles to investors or the community at large. Nationally, the trend is that many retail stores and other businesses are rejecting malls and returning to main streets. A market

analysis, for example, can identify a retail tenant mix based on categories. The analysis can identify the types of retail that are supportable and those that are vulnerable to over competition.

12. Use new buildings to fill in strategic locations. Capture lost space downtown by building upon strategic lots as they become available. Adding more places to live and work will ensure the viability downtown merchants. Note that retailers need not occupy all of the new buildings' downstairs levels, especially on the edges of the core area; most functional main streets are less than 1000 feet long.

General References

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Encouraging Downtown Business, Incentives & Regulations

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For information on why downtowns are a good choice for redevelopment:
<http://www.plannersweb.com/trends/8down.html>



Lexington Street, from its western terminus at Main Street to Paynes Mill Road at its eastern end, changes character several times. Further away from Downtown Versailles, it is a rural road with horse farms on either side. Closer to Downtown, it passes a school campus and is more of an urban street. The few blocks that are directly north and south of the bypass have a very different look than the rest of the road, too. These few blocks have developed as a classic 1900s 'taxpayer strip'.

What is a “Taxpayer Strip”?

The term “taxpayer strip” comes from the fact that most of the buildings on Lexington Street date from a time when they were located at the edge of town. They were developed by speculators at an intensity adequate enough to generate sufficient income to pay taxes on the land, while waiting for the town proper to spread to the point where redeveloping to a higher and better use was justified. On many such strips, that evolution was stopped in its tracks, though, as the segment of road was passed by when new speculators, urged on by highway projects, just moved further out onto more cheap land with fewer constraints

Yet three things exacerbate the situation. First, state level transportation entities are charged with making roads efficient for cars, and they have done so well with that limited goal that auto-oriented development is now almost too easy. In the past thirty years, the highway-building subsidy has created a syndrome where location on a newly improved roadway is perceived as a strong market advantage because more cars mean greater ability to capture sales. Second, lending policies have contributed to the problem by making it easier to finance new construction on the urban fringe and harder to renovate and restore within the heart of town. Third, the land development regulations are flawed; given the sprawl-type setbacks, parking ratios, and other details in the zoning rules, a disappointing urban form is going to result even when one follows the rules.

As the taxpayer strip corridors age, their original attractions decline and they lose their identity; they are neither town nor country, neither Main Street, nor state-of-the-art arterial shopping centers, neither new nor historic, neither completely broken but rarely fixed.

Parts of Lexington Street exhibit characteristics of the typical taxpayer strip. Since development spread further out, the taxpayer strips are often now located, ironically, toward the center of town. For years there was little incentive or pressure to redevelop and fill in older parts of the strip while there seemed to be plenty of developable land. Today, however, it is agreed that continual outward sprawl is unacceptable, so a redevelopment strategy for directing growth to recovering corridors like Lexington Street is particularly useful. Redevelopment along this corridor, while less critical than revitalizing Downtown or establishing Uptown, will enhance the character of Versailles and serve as a model for the region.

Transforming the Auto-oriented Strip

The current building and street design of Lexington Street is focused only on meeting the needs of through traffic, with an appalling disregard for pedestrian safety and needs. Even for residents in the immediate area, it is practically unthinkable to walk a few short blocks to get something from one of the stores because the street does not feel adequately safe or attractive for walking. Part of the reason is because these 'blocks' are built in typical strip format. One-story, single use buildings, generally located near the center of their lots, dominate the scene. Buildings are set back somewhat randomly, separated from the road by parking lots. The buildings do not form a defined street edge. Parking generally surrounds them. Curb cuts and driveways are unnecessarily wide, poorly defined, and excessive in number; as a result there is almost no sidewalk and no on-street parking. Cars can enter or exit almost anywhere on the street.

This section of Lexington Street is thus quite hostile to pedestrian-oriented development. But it is also becoming a magnet for the destructive, plastic, tacky development that springs up on such corridors, including boxy office buildings, standard-issue oil-change franchises, and off-the-shelf drive-through fast food places. It was made very plain during the public planning process that the citizen participants do not want this trend to continue. Given that the economic future of the County largely depends on preservation of its character, this trend is also out of sync with any plan for sustainable, long-term success.

Today there is an opportunity to change all three of these factors with coordinated public policy and private initiative. The funds for road projects - the same money that used to make the situation worse in the past - can be redirected to enhance and correct the street. Public financial instruments, coupled with the tools already available to private lending institutions, can make smart growth eminently finance-able. With leadership, public/private initiative can spawn mechanisms like “location-efficient mortgages” that offer attractive financing for

Central Park

redevelopment that occurs where it is most needed. Last, the new Woodford Code will correct the shortcomings of the land development regulations.

Fixing Lexington Street through Public-Private Revitalization

The ultimate goal is to make Lexington Street an economically viable, pedestrian-friendly part of Versailles.

While many parts of Lexington Street serve the automobile, one section has remained undeveloped. This urban greenspace was an important topic to many community members, who marked its preservation as one of their priorities. The preservation of the long views across the landscape is part of what makes Woodford County special. The proximity to both Downtown and the US 60 Bypass make preservation of this piece of land especially tricky. The likelihood of it remaining under private ownership for an extended period of time may wane as surrounding property values rise. Buying the property outright and putting it in public control to use as passive open space would be exceedingly worthwhile. Public purchasing of the land for storm water management is possible. If private ownership is necessary, then a passive, but revenue generating, use such as a horse farm museum or other eco-tourist venture would be a viable compromise.



No Access



8 points of entry and exit onto Lexington Street - each one a source of potential traffic conflict.

With Access Management



With only 2 points of entry and exit onto Lexington Street and shared parking, space is created for pedestrian access and street trees, and traffic conflicts are reduced.

Fixing Lexington Street through Public-Private Cooperation

Confidence to reinvest in the street begins with a capital improvement project. The rights-of-way can be rebuilt through state and county transportation funds. Redevelopment can also begin, through the coordination of businesses and property owners.

The ultimate goal is to make Lexington Street an economically viable, pedestrian-friendly part of Versailles. Redeveloping the street with mixed-use buildings that allow for a variety of uses will help the street adapt gracefully to the market. Whether these buildings have retail, office, restaurants, workshops, or apartments is not as critical as rebuilding in a coherent manner that creates a well defined street edge.

The first step is to shift the focus from meeting the needs of the automobile to creating an attractive, pedestrian-friendly street. A consistent sidewalk with on-street parking can be created within the public right-of-way. This can be accomplished through access management, consolidating the number driveway entrances and their widths. This will reduce the number of turns on and off the roadway, making a more continuous sidewalk and allowing for the addition of on-street parking.

Once sidewalks, landscaping, and on-street parking are added the street is perceived as an asset to the community and a desirable location. The public support for redevelopment will create investor confidence within the business community.

Existing conditions are dominated by the automobile because of wide travel lanes and



No sidewalk, no shade, and no shelter creates a hostile environment for pedestrians.

On street parking is an important first step as it creates a buffer between the pedestrian and the traffic.

Adding a sidewalk with shade trees provides shade and shelter for the pedestrian.



With this public initiative, the street serves both cars and people, but the buildings are still set back from the street. The area is still not

Colonnades, awnings and balconies create more shade and shelter for the pedestrian.



Constructing buildings at the street will encourage more pedestrian activity, creating a potential market for outdoor dining and cafes.

The Required Steps

1. Create an access management program. Reduce the number of curb cuts, by consolidating the number of driveway entrances to each business from the roadway. This will create a more defined place for automobiles. In addition to allowing the creation of a sidewalk, traffic will actually flow more efficiently, too.

2. Include Lexington Street on the project list of the Transportation Improvement Program. Make clear to all state agencies that improving Lexington Street is a priority.

3. Share the parking, and interconnect it. Businesses that have different peak times (e.g. a medical office and a movie theater) can then utilize the same parking spaces and reduce the total number of parking spaces needed. Create shared parking regulations. Shared parking will allow the land to be used more efficiently; more of the land can be used for income-producing buildings rather than parking. Consolidated driveways will also allow business to share parking spaces. Interconnecting the parking lots and assembling a network of alleys will allow motorists to circulate between nearby businesses without necessarily re-entering the traffic on Lexington Street.

4. Build a sidewalk. Add a sidewalk with street trees and other landscaping. The sidewalk should allow for safe and pleasant pedestrian access to the stores.

5. Add on-street parking. On-street parking will create a buffer between the pedestrians and motorists as well as providing easily accessible parking spaces for retail, restaurants and offices.

6. Nurture public-private confidence. Create a public improvement program that would construct sidewalks, repave lanes for on-street parking, and consolidate entrances. Showing private developers that improvements are being made will generate a sense of commitment and stability necessary to stir investment.

Who pays for redeveloping streets?

Streets are improved and redeveloped through a range of financial resources. The spectrum includes public monies, bonds and self-taxing districts, to a totally privately financed undertaking. Quite often more than one revenue source will be used jointly to redevelop a street. As a hypothetical example, the community decides on a design that reduces curb cuts, and includes drainage and sidewalk improvements. The design of the street also includes trees, light posts, benches and bicycle racks. State Funding may only provide for the infrastructure improvements and minimal landscaping. A bond is created to pay for larger trees, a developer donates the light posts, and members of the community donate benches with memorial plaques. There is more than one solution.



Before



After

Sunset Drive, South Miami Florida. A travel lane was removed, sidewalks widened and drainage improved. The redevelopment of the street was paid for by the developer who was building new mixed use buildings on



Before



After

Park Avenue, Winter Park Florida. Travel lanes was narrowed, sidewalks widened, sewer lines replaced, and communication lines added. The redevelopment of the street was paid with by a combination City Funds



Versailles Center, as it exists today, does not impart a positive impression of Versailles. A plain strip center of underutilized commercial buildings and parking lots, it nevertheless occupies a vitally important parcel. Versailles Center has an opportunity to be a tremendously positive feature of Woodford County. As one enters Versailles from the north and the east, Versailles Center is the first prominent feature that is visible from the road. By redeveloping its physical details, incorporating urban design principles, the owners can create a built form here that is both lucrative and reflects positively on Versailles.



A view down a mixed use street. The buildings contain a variety of uses that will support a wide variety of lifestyles.

Building Responsibly Keeps the Bluegrass Green

It is highly unlikely, given the current strip center condition of Versailles Center, that it will ever return to being a green space or farmland. Years ago, Woodford County leadership saw fit to permit commercial development to spread to this location astride the highway; now the task falls to the new generation of property owners and leaders here to redo it in a more lasting, contributive way. If this "Uptown" is rebuilt responsibly, within the Bluegrass building traditions of real neighborhoods, it will feature:

-A mix of jobs, housing and daily needs within walking distance of each other - This offers one an opportunity to live, work and get daily needs within the same area without relying so much upon car trips. This intermingling of uses will reduce the number of trips on the regional road network.

-A framework of walkable streets and buildings that can evolve - The particular uses of each new structure will probably change over time, but only if the buildings and streets are built to last and built to adapt.

-A model for more compact growth Highly livable neighborhoods can be built on far less land than recent subdivisions, and this is the only way to aesthetically and profitably accommodate growth while preserving the rural character of the Bluegrass region. Uptown could illustrate to the development industry how compact growth works.

A Complete New Neighborhood

Versailles, like many cities in the Bluegrass, is growing. After a long period of declining occupancy and vacant stores at Versailles Center, there is now new pressure to redevelop this hodgepodge of a shopping strip. Yet, it is an understatement to say there has been controversy about proposed redevelopment here. Many citizens of Woodford are determined that, when the next wave of changes take place here, the mistakes of the past should not be repeated.

Some of the controversy about Versailles Center has been about competition with downtown. While it is inevitable that there will be competition between the two, this competition does not mean that one will 'beat' the other. Each area will succeed by capitalizing on its unique characteristics: Downtown will be a destination because of the civic uses and historic buildings. Uptown would be able to support national chains and/or entertainment establishments. Downtown will be able to support a market for local products in a setting that is full of historic character. Uptown will have advantages, but will never be able to replicate the historic feel of Main Street.

This new 'Uptown' will inevitably grow. The solution is for all new growth, both Downtown and Uptown, to be built in a responsible way, with a solid urban form of blocks, streets, and greens that include a mix of uses within walking distance of each other. Growing in a compact way helps preserve the open spaces surrounding the town, and both Downtown and Uptown are prime candidates for accommodating this kind of growth. In addition, offering a balance of jobs and housing within the same walkable area will help moderate the negative impacts of sprawl within the region and offset the growing reliance on roads.

The new Uptown, if built properly, can be a complete neighborhood, with a mix of uses and building types that provide a variety of places to live and work. Towards the intersection of Lexington Street and the US 60 Bypass, at the heart of the new uptown, there should be multi-story buildings

Build Towards the Plan

with retail, offices, and restaurants. Further away from the intersection and Lexington Street, the character of the streets should change; these streets will be quieter, lined with apartment buildings, attached rowhouses, and even some single-family homes on fairly small lots. Some of the rowhouses can be flexible “live-work” units that are ideal for telecommuters, home-based businesses, and startups. Development of Uptown can unfold in phases:

Getting the Details Right

The Master Plan illustrates what can occur through several decades of thoughtful growth. In the beginning, the first few streets will not appear perfect or complete. The main thing is to follow the plan; keep in mind the vision the community created and adhere to it. Build the network of streets, and orient the buildings towards the streets. Construct high-quality buildings that will last. The accompanying new Woodford code will assist in regulating the details.

A network of connected streets and blocks.

An existing retail building is given a new shopfront facade and fits into the network of streets.

The frontage road encourages a healthy retail environment. It provides a travel lane for motorists to feel comfortable enough to park on-street.

On-street parking and wide sidewalks create a comfortable retail environment. Shopfront buildings with windows and doors create an interesting street-- encouraging lingering, shopping and dining.

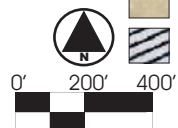
Detention is provided in the frontage road swale.

Additional parking spaces are provided behind buildings.

Frontage Road connects to more than one entrance.

Median with Trees.

- Civic Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings



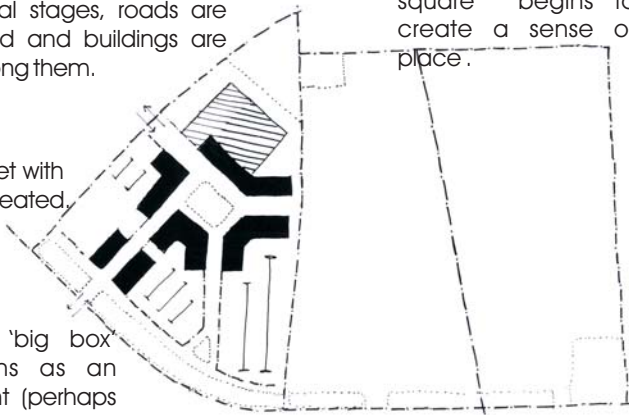
1. Build for the long term. Learn from the past and build with a longer time horizon. In the last few decades, many buildings were built under the assumption that the

A

In the initial stages, roads are constructed and buildings are fronted along them.

A mixed-use shopfront street with sidewalks is created.

The original 'big box' store remains as an anchor tenant (perhaps a movie theater), but liner buildings are added along at least one side.



A frontage road with street trees is constructed along the perimeter of the site.

The addition of a square begins to create a sense of place.

B

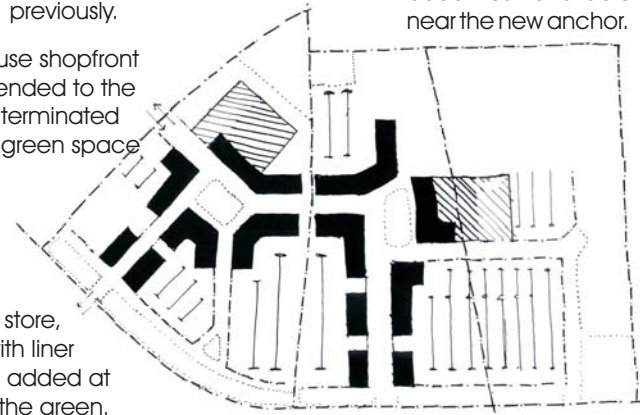
More stores begin to line the streets added previously.

The mixed-use shopfront street is extended to the east and is terminated by another green space or plaza.

An anchor store, wrapped with liner buildings, is added at the end of the green.

'Visibility corridors' ensure that buildings can be initially seen from the roadway.

A site for a hotel becomes available near the new anchor.

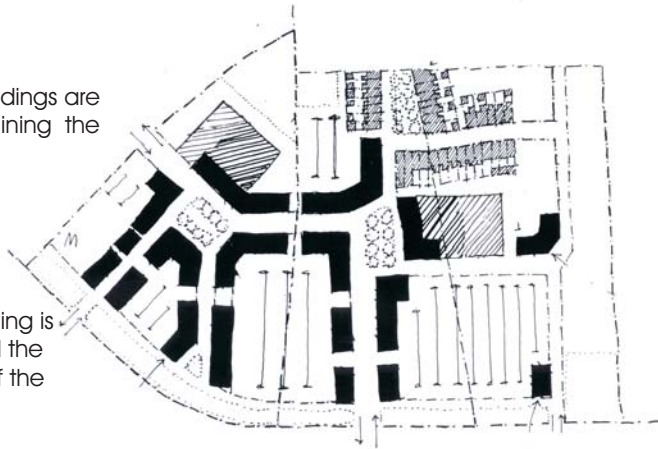


Surface parking remains, but is

C

Residential buildings are added further lining the streets.

An office building is added toward the eastern end of the property.



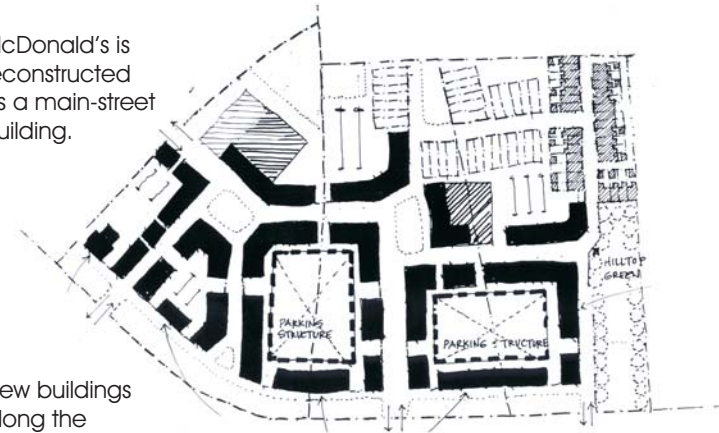
Prominent buildings along the frontage road occupy the landmark locations.

D

Surface parking replaced with parking

McDonald's is reconstructed as a main-street building.

New buildings along the frontage road have high visibility.



More residential uses are added.

developer would get a return on his or her investment within a time span of ten to fifteen years and would then desert the property. Create developments with a longer time horizon, with buildings that can be adapted and reused. There are a variety of financing mechanisms that can stimulate longer term development (i.e. city issued bonds, tax increment financing, special loans). Without these incentives or options, development will be forced into short term standards.

2. Build multi-story mixed-use buildings. In commercial areas, build multi-story buildings that will have a greater positive impact than a one-story building. Successful streets depend on the sense of spatial enclosure that is created when certain proportional relationships are achieved between the width of the street space and the height of the buildings on either side. Multi-story buildings can also adapt better to the changing market than large, single-story, single-use buildings because of the potential tenant mix. A multi-story building could easily hold one or more different tenants as each one could be located on a different floor, or one tenant on all floors. Also, there are only a few types of businesses that can take advantage of a large warehouse type building (i.e. Businesses that need lots of space). Land will also be conserved when buildings take up a smaller amount of land and are built taller than one story.

3. Add a frontage road that parallels the bypass. Design the new street to be pedestrian- and retail-friendly, with wide sidewalks, landscaping, and on-street parking. The median between the bypass and the frontage road should be designed as a generous linear park, with shade trees lining the streets.

4. Create a variety of building types and sizes. Add buildings in a variety of types and sizes, configured for incremental growth. The variety (including civic buildings, mixed-use shopfront buildings, apartment buildings, attached rowhouses, and single-family detached houses) will help create a stronger sense of place, a balance of places to live and work, and diverse prices. Variety adapts well to economic changes. This is in contrast to the idea of building one humongous building for

lease to a single tenant, the real estate equivalent of putting all your eggs in one basket which might “go dark” in only a few years, bringing down everything else with it.

5. Build real streets. Streets are to be defined by buildings, with doors and windows that face the public right of-way. Parking lots should be located behind buildings. Provide on-street parallel parking adjacent to the sidewalk. Design the streets for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

6. Build safe streets. Streets with narrow travel lanes and wide, gracious sidewalks are safest. Narrow travel lanes will calm traffic. Travel lanes 10 feet wide in commercial areas, and travel lanes 9 feet wide on the less-used residential streets, are appropriate.

-On-street parking lanes should be 7 feet wide.

-Sidewalks on commercial streets should be 12 to 15 feet wide. Sidewalks on residential streets can be 5 to 6 feet wide. (The proposed Woodford code will provide specifics on the design of street cross-sections.)

7. Manage parking. Create a variety of parking options that foster both pedestrian and vehicular access. Parking should be located behind buildings, with on-street parking next to the sidewalk. Locate parking behind buildings. Insist that the varied uses (retail, entertainment, civic, office, housing) share their parking supply efficiently. As Uptown is built out, a shift to structured parking will allow for the better use of valuable land. These practices will reduce the amount of land consumed needlessly for parking.



An entrance to Uptown, looking north from Lexington Street.



Mortonsville's long history tells a story that mirrors many small towns across the United States. Like other rural settlements in the Bluegrass, Mortonsville lost the economic influences that created the center. As times changed, much of the town's historic built environment was abandoned or began crumbling away. Gone now are all but a few of the store buildings; the historic bank building is an empty shell; the school building no longer houses a school. Today Mortonsville is a rural community defined officially by a one-mile radius. In addition to older homes, there are two churches, a fire station, one roadside store, and a stream that crosses through the middle of the settlement. Farms mostly surround the community.

In the nineteenth century, Mortonsville played a significant role in the history and economy of



The historic bank in
Mortonsville



The historic center in
Mortonsville

Kentucky. One of the first banks in the state was located here. Mortonsville was a true center in the region: five stores, a post office, a school, and the bank were all located along Delaney's Ferry Road. The 1870 Census reports a population of 744, although some significant number of those people probably lived beyond the one-mile radius we refer to today as the Mortonsville Small Community. In those days, it took three hours by horse-drawn cart just to travel from Mortonsville to Versailles.

Growth pressure has returned to Mortonsville. Newer homes and non-descript subdivisions have begun to appear at its edges. The newer development is not in keeping with the character of Mortonsville and has been offensive to many in the community. The soft, gentle quality of the older structures is missing in the newer development. Instead of following the rural village pattern of the original settlement, the new subdivisions have a suburban feel. This is reflected in the siting of the buildings on their lots and upon the land, the architectural style and landscape treatment.

Rebirth of the Rural Community

This situation is not unique to Mortonsville. Millsville, Nonesuch, and other communities in rural Woodford County have experienced similar fluctuations in growth and prosperity. Pressure to grow exists throughout most of the Bluegrass, it is often found today in small communities like these that orbit thriving regional, urban centers. Why are these pristine rural lands becoming attractive places for new residents after all these years?

Our motorized freedom of movement is certainly one factor. The decrease in travel times realized by the car allows people to live in and enjoy Mortonsville's quiet, rural character, but still work in Versailles, Lexington, or Frankfort. Mortonsville, and towns

like it, offer an alternative to people who are willing to drive farther to avoid living in the bland, sprawling subdivisions cropping up around the larger cities.

The risk, however, is that if more and more houses following the conventional suburban template are built here, the small towns will be deformed into a facsimile of the same subdivisions from which the newcomers are fleeing. Under this scenario each new homesite takes away from the original allure and sense of place. The solution? Channel growth into authentic traditional neighborhoods, re-establishing patterns in which each new addition makes the whole more complete. The neighborhoods should have an interconnected network of walkable streets; no cul-de-sacs. Houses should front the streets and have porches. Small neighborhood parks should be a short walk from all the houses.

It has proved extraordinarily difficult, legally, politically or practically, for a county government to stop growth, or to prohibit people from moving to certain sectors of the county. It is, however, much more realistic to use codes and standards to control the *character* and *quality* of future growth. Plans for new subdivisions prompted the no-growth camp to get unusual new zoning rules and subdivision regulations passed for development in the rural areas, but, there are flaws in that first generation of laws that are resulting in unintended consequences. It will be necessary to adopt a more refined set of codes and standards to achieve the balanced vision for creating stronger communities in rural Woodford County.

Comparing How to Grow

Mortonville was selected as a Small Community within Woodford County which would be a model for a Master Plan. The planning principals and concepts are intended to apply to all Small Communities in Woodford County.



Existing

After years of urban and suburban expansion, the once-thriving center of Mortonville is little more than shells of old buildings.



Mortonville can become more complete. Adding a few buildings and houses, as well as restoring the historic buildings, can bring back a true center for the residents of Mortonville. Adding a general store and post office are just two of the many ideas that people suggested during the charrette. Stores that support agricultural needs, or a small café and restaurant

An analysis for Mortonsville examines growth under the existing and proposed regulations. Based upon population projections and breakdowns from the Versailles Comprehensive Plan, Mortonsville, (or any other Small Community for that matter), could expect to grow by 200 dwelling units in the next twenty years.

The first map illustrates the existing development. The second map illustrates the continuation of the recent pattern of growth, following the rules that say no new roads can be added. This scenario shows how, under the current regulations, Mortonsville will devolve into an ordinary subdivision, with little regard for maintaining the rural character or the landscape.

The third map illustrates a greater number of projected future homesites but the homes are configured in a more traditional, compact way of settling the land. This scenario emulates the time-honored settlement pattern used for the original homes and buildings along Delaney's Ferry Road. In this scenario, new development is intentionally designed in a way that preserves open space while creating a strong sense of place: buildings are close to the street on varied, moderately sized lots. As a result, the views to the rural landscape would be preserved.

Main Objectives for Mortonsville and other Small Communities

These planning principals and concepts are intended to apply to all Small Communities in Woodford County.

In the long term, just limiting the number of roads does not necessarily preserve the rural landscape or the views to it. Also,

Existing



Diagram 1 shows existing development in Mortonsville. Note the historic growth at the center and more recent homesites added at the edges. The black "dots" represent many of the existing buildings.

Current Regulation Build-



Diagram 2 shows a total buildout scenario according to the current regulations, which allow for 1-acre lots on existing roads (no new roads are permitted). By 2014, all of the expected 200 units will probably have been added. This scenario maximizes burden on the road network and consumes large amounts of land.

Proposed Build-



Diagram 3 illustrates a greater number of dwellings, but using improved codes and a traditional settlement pattern. More compact development concentrates growth in the center, allowing for stronger identity and for larger, contiguous areas of land to be preserved.

current regulations do not prevent the development of large tracts of land. Therefore a more comprehensive look at long-term growth and the values and desires of the community formed the basis for the Mortonville Plan in this report.

The overall principle for the Plan is to focus growth into compact, walkable neighborhoods that include a mix of uses. The purpose of this type of neighborhood is twofold. First, keeping the neighborhoods small means that larger tracts of rural land can be preserved and/or used for agriculture. Second, a mix of uses can provide goods and services that residents need on a daily basis. It should be possible, again, to access at least some daily needs without having to drive to another town! When the neighborhoods are compact and interconnected, people can walk to the store, visit friends, or church; many automobile trips on the road network can be shortened or eliminated in this way. Beyond those practical advantages, this development pattern will be respectful to the historic character of the town and extend its charm.

This plan shows one hypothetical buildout for Mortonville. Variations to street and building location can occur and still meet the main objectives of this plan, which include:

- The old buildings in the Historic Center should be renovated or restored and inhabited.
- Commercial and business uses should be encouraged in the Historic Center and adjacent to the existing convenience store.
- New streets should be interconnected to provide multiple accesses to both the new and old neighborhoods. The new streets should form blocks for new lots.
- Houses should face the new streets with front porches.
- Each neighborhood or ward should have a small neighborhood park or green.
- Future growth within Mortonville should be contiguous, it should be regulated to start at the historic center first and grow outward.
- Mortonville is separated into two halves by the creek and the adjacent embankment. The creek and the

embankment should be preserved as a greenway. Bike and walking paths should cross the greenway where possible to further connect the two halves of the village. These paths will provide safe routes for children, away from moving vehicles, to walk or bike to their friends' houses, to the convenience store, or to the much-needed future neighborhood school.

- The water tower next to the old school should have "Mortonville" painted on the water tank, to enhance the sense of place.
- To stay in character with existing houses, all new houses along Delaney's Ferry and Carpenter Pike should be sited 50 to 75 feet from the road, except for those within the Historic Center which should be closer to the road to enhance the sense of place.
- Control light pollution by choosing lighting that is in scale with surrounding houses and roads.

Keeping the Rural Character - the Strategy

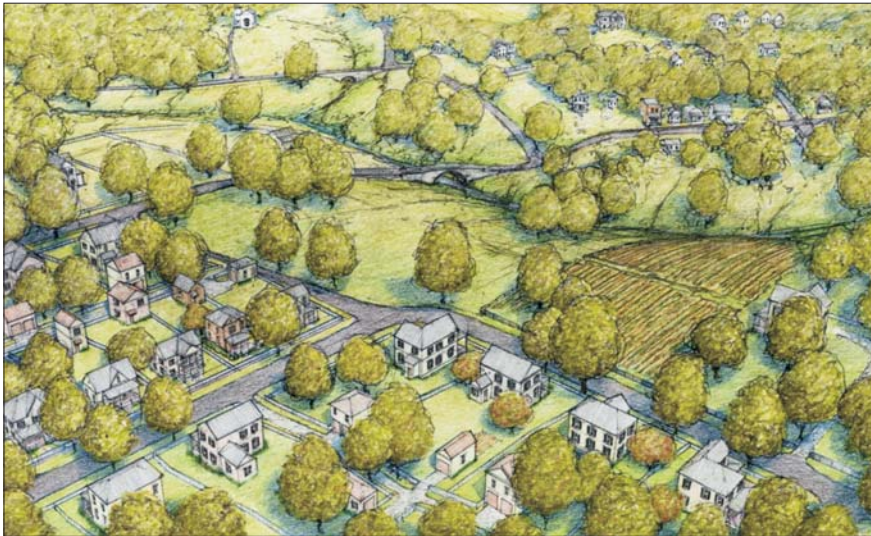
1. Revitalize the Center. Make the center of the community even more useful and meaningful for the community. The center of Mortonville should be a place of greater activity where a civic presence as well as daily needs and services are found. The historic character should also be preserved. It is critical to rehabilitate the remaining historic buildings before they lose their structural integrity. Combining private investment with grant funding and tax credits for restoration can be used to save historic buildings. Work with preservation trusts or set up a special not-for-profit organization if necessary.

Renovating the former school and bank can help maintain the

The Big Ideas

These fundamental principles for the Mortonville Plan came from the community:

1. Build and restore real neighborhoods.
2. Revive, yet protect, the rural community.
3. Protect farms and scenic heritage.



An aerial perspective of Mortonville, showing how neighborhoods can fit into the rural landscape. Also, farm land is preserved by clustering neighborhoods

original character of the town while providing practical uses for the neighbors. An ideal scenario would be to convert the old school back into a school, for example. Many Mortonville citizens expressed dismay at the loss of the school. Whether the revived school is located in the old building or built anew, this particular opportunity reflects the national reconsideration of mega-schools; there is a growing consensus that larger schools are not necessarily better ones, and a small school at Mortonville could be both a state-of-the-art example for educators and part of rebuilding the bonds of community.

2. Grow out from the center, but very carefully. New development should connect and relate to the existing settlement. Each new increment of growth should follow a traditional neighborhood pattern; new neighborhoods should have discernible center and edge, a mix of dwelling types, and interconnected streets. Concentrate growth in certain areas to allow for larger, significant tracts of farmland to be preserved (see diagrams on page 5.5).

3. Preserve historic and rural character. New development should complement the existing settlement. It should be very similar to the traditional character of the settlement pattern. The architecture of new buildings should repeat the scale of existing buildings, using simple proportions and roof pitches. New development should maintain existing hedgerows, preserve stands of trees, and respect the topography. Fences should be similar to those seen throughout Woodford County. The historic stone walls seen throughout should be emulated where possible. New development should be in keeping with the scale, siting and architectural character of the existing community

4. Conserve the natural features as part of the community. Natural features within and next to a Small Community are an integral part of defining the character of a rural community. Careful attention to topography, long vistas, and environmental

features can help to determine the areas that should be conserved or maintained as open space for the well-being and enjoyment of the community's residents. For example, the creeks and the hills that define the creek can be preserved as a greenway or linear park. This land is not suitable for development in any event, but should be carefully incorporated into the design of the community to ensure the integrity of the features as well as their role in enhancing the sense of place. Several tools should be considered to accomplish the preservation of special lands and green spaces:

- The County can establish a riparian zone as part of the Zoning Ordinance.
- The County can purchase lands as County parks or open space.
- The landowner can volunteer to maintain the area, perhaps with the help of a volunteer corps from the community.
- The landowner can sell or donate the land to a civic organization as a conservation easement, thereby realizing a substantial tax break.

5. Encourage and allow diverse agricultural uses. Rural lands can only remain countryside if they have economically viable uses or they are bought and preserved as open space. The farming and thoroughbred-raising trades are essential for maintaining the character of the rural community. Agricultural uses must be a realistic financial choice for the property owner. New agriculture-related uses and eco-tourism must be encouraged and allowed, including hunting or birding lodges. Bed-and-breakfast inns located on farms should be allowed to provide for and accommodate more than the current, unworkable limit of four guest rooms.

6. Allow neighborhood uses. Regulations should allow for small community businesses and services to help to meet daily needs of local residents. This can make the center of Mortonsville useful for the community and also reduce or shorten car trips. Stores and services that meet the needs of the residents within walking distance are part of the basic appeal of small town life. As the centermost neighborhood grows back

Keeping the Rural Character

Traditional houses in a rural landscape behave differently than recently built homes found in rural subdivisions. New homes, if thoughtfully designed, can be a pleasing neighbor in a rural community. The difference is in the details. As a comparison these two homes can



Traditional homes:

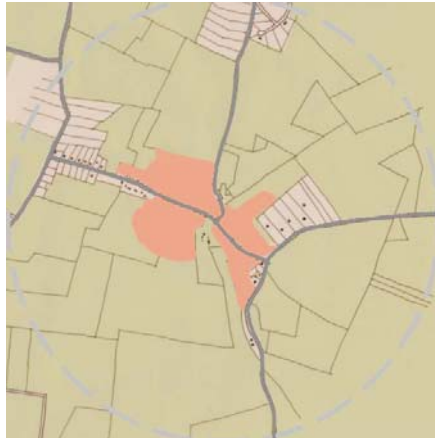
- are located close to the street, creating an interesting experience;
- often have deep, usable porches;
- have simple volumes and proportions;
- have an architectural style and details in keeping with the Bluegrass building tradition;
- and typically define their property with fences and knee walls.



Typical subdivisions:

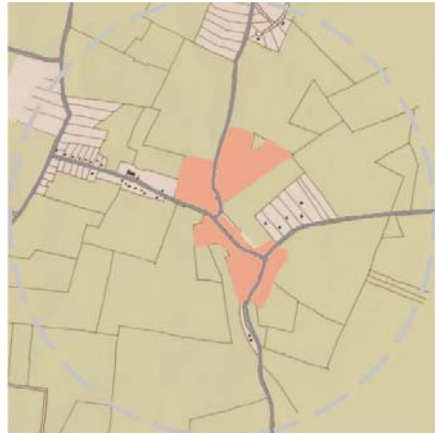
- are generally set far back, the street is not defined, Creating an unwelcoming appearance;
- often do not have porches;
- have a convoluted volume and proportion;
- often have no architectural style that is part of the Bluegrass building tradition;
- and typically do not define their property.

One Pattern of Concentrated Growth



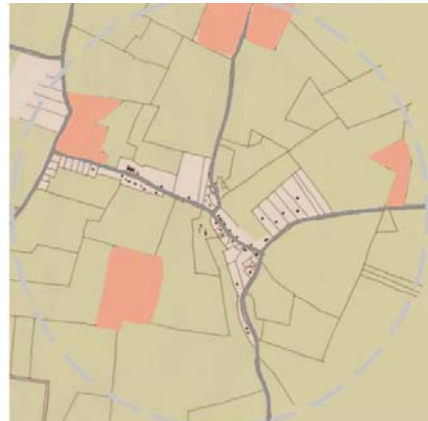
Neighborhoods are at the center. Resources are used efficiently.

Another Pattern of Concentrated Growth



Similar in concept - neighborhoods at the center - but pattern could be flexible dependent on private development and investment.

A Pattern of Random Growth



Concentrated neighborhoods, but separated from one another. This pattern increases long term infrastructure costs. There will also be more congestion and traffic.

together and perhaps a new neighborhood is added, the settlement will reach the stage where it can again support a small amount of retail, particularly if Mortonsville is promoted to visitors (and to local proprietors of eating places or antique stores that nurture a good regional reputation).

7. Consider tightening the one-mile radius to 1/2-mile while protecting the rights of the individuals within the one-mile radius. It is important to note that the City of Versailles fits within a one-mile radius. The intent has been to keep Small Communities— *small*. In light of the growth comparison exercise on page 5.4, which indicates the predicted 20-year growth, it is important to rethink the size of the radius that delineates Mortonsville as a Small Community.

8. Allow growth only when infrastructure is feasible. Rethink how infrastructure works in Small Communities and rural areas. Ensure that the burden of new infrastructure, such as roads, utilities, water, sewer, schools, and other community needs are not born by the existing residents alone. New growth must help pay for the costs of new infrastructure.

9. Establish a County Sewer District. The Woodford County Fiscal Court should establish a county sewer district for that area outside the Urban Service Boundary of Versailles and Midway. The county sewer district should operate according to State regulations and guidelines including required maintenance of septic tanks every three years. The individual tanks and lines from each building should be on a public easement.

10. Establish a Development Rights Program. For all rural zoning districts, the property owner has certain development (density) rights vested under the current Zoning Ordinance. This Code assumes that those rights would remain intact. The use of these rights, however, can be more flexible than just building houses on the land where the rights reside. Under a type of free-market buying and selling program, property owners could sell rights for

what the market will bear, or combine these rights in joint partnership developments. The County's role is to record the buying and selling so as to determine post-transaction zoning.

existing State law.

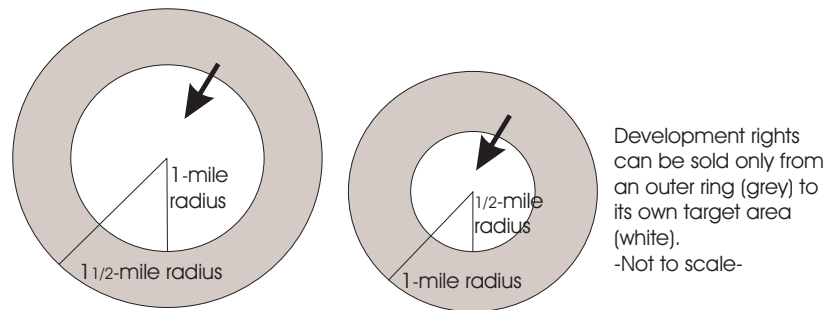
Property owners within the 1/2 to one-mile radius of Mortonsville or Nonesuch, and within the one-mile to 1 1/2-mile radius of Millville shall have the option of:

1. Developing a Rural Residential Cluster with the density (development) rights vested under the current Zoning Ordinance;
- or
2. Transferring development rights into the one-half mile radius area of Mortonsville or Nonesuch or the one mile radius area of Millville through voluntary sale to a public or private buyer (rights transferred within each locality). These rights are allocated according to the existing zoning districts. An incentive is given for the one acre lot density (development) rights along currently existing public roads: two additional density bonus rights per property can be transferred if the rest of the rights are all transferred. Rights are transferred in perpetuity.

11. Make other legislative strategies.

The Task Force recommends that the A-2 Ordinance be amended to strike residences as a permitted principal or accessory use.

With respect to the goal of encouraging rural and agricultural uses in the County, the Task Force recommends that the County adopt a Right-to-Farm ordinance modeled after the



Implementation suggestions for specific areas of Versailles and Mortonsville are found in the appropriate chapters of this report. Listed below are countywide recommendations that are more global, outlining what should be done next to follow up on the Master Planning effort.

1. Adopt the Master Plan in Concept.

The Master Plan should be used as a supplement to or an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The Task Force and the Fiscal Courts should pass an Adoption-in-Concept resolution giving the Town and Country Master Plan official standing and adopt the Master Plan as an amendment. This will send an important message to property owners and residents that the Task Force, City Council members, and Fiscal Court all support the Plan and that the County intends to implement its principles. This resolution will give clear direction to County staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission that they are to instruct applicants to meet the goals of the Plan.

2. Re-examine the Comprehensive Plan.

There are no major conflicts, but the following points identify recommended changes for the next revision to the Comprehensive Plan:

- Reference the Master Plan and Urban Code where needed, identifying locations in the County where they apply.
- A new goal is needed encouraging smart growth practices that encourage mixing uses and requiring an integrated network of streets, variety in lot dimensions, and better pedestrian/bike amenities.
- Similarly, in the text regarding the goal entitled "Industrial Development," buffers between industrial areas and residential areas should be permeable so that people can

choose to walk or bike from home to work without having to travel around long barriers.

- In Chapter IV, Future Land Use Plan: Small Communities, pages 85-87, the text refers to one-acre lots within the small communities. Lots should be permitted to be less than one acre, provided adequate sewage treatment can be provided. The text seems to allow only one-acre lots and should be modified to allow smaller lots. The text should also reference the main design concepts from the Mortonsville Master Plan that apply to all the small communities.
- Decrease the size of the Small Communities Radius to a maximum of a half mile Radius. As explained in Chapter 5, the existing Radius is too large.
- The section on Small Communities, pages 85-87, the text should identify the strategy that future growth should start within the close proximity of the designated center and work outwards as opposed to occurring anywhere within the designated radius. This concept should override the suggestion that prime farmland should not be developed; however, this conflict will likely not occur in the real world. The historic centers of these small communities already have multiple ownerships and the prime farmland is likely to be farther away.

3. Consider Tightening the Urban Services Boundary.

The current 20-year Urban Service Boundaries (USBs) were established in 1997 with projections specified in the Comprehensive Plan. These boundaries will be reevaluated every five years as revisions to the Comprehensive Plan are

contemplated. The proposed Woodford County Urban Code allows for a higher density than what is typically built in the urbanized areas of Woodford County today. If the existing urban areas are built in this more compact way with the current rate of growth, the actual land consumption for the increasing population should be lower than projected in the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore it is likely that increasing the USBs will not be necessary, making the lifespan of the current USBs last much longer than 20 years.

4. Adopt the New Urban Code for Woodford County, the City of Versailles and the City of Midway.

The New Urban Code, which has been drafted and is being revised at the time of this report, will be the main implementation vehicle for the Master Plan. The County and its citizens should review and refine this code and make it official as soon as possible. If the code is not adopted quickly, the community may be faced with hard decisions and disappointment as applicants come forward wanting to use the existing zoning and development codes.

This code is different from the existing rules, in that:

- It is focused on prescribing the physical form that is intended, instead of just specifying those aspects that are not permitted;
- It is graphic by nature, showing photographs and drawings to illustrate the intent;
- It uses Regulating Plans to specify street and lot patterns; and
- It uses Building Placement Standards to specify the basic parameters that govern building location, form, and size.
- It introduces Architectural Standards that specify basic parameters that encourages more fitting building form.

Because the new code is more specific about what the built results will be, the approval process can be streamlined to accelerate the time required for the applicants with compliant proposals. If an applicant is requesting variances, of course, then the approval process should require more scrutiny.

5. Confirm physical and regulatory conditions.

This Master Plan was created with limited information regarding rights-of-way, property lines, existing building locations, easements, utility limitations, and covenants tied to individual properties. As site-specific applications come forward and municipal improvements are undertaken, modifications will be necessary as accurate surveys and site analyses are conducted. It is best to implement a County-wide GIS system immediately to assist in this process.

6. Promote the Master Plans for Versailles and Mortonsville.

Secure press coverage of the new plan as well as any new projects completed in these cities under the guidance of the Master Plan. Spread the message that the Master Plan specifies the desired pattern of development and how these improvements are beneficial to the community. Parade the images of the first successful project in the press, at public meetings, at service clubs, on television, in traveling exhibits, and on posters and postcards. Provide realtors with handouts highlighting what's coming soon in Woodford County. Promote the plan so that it will take on a life of its own and continue to work for the County long after changes occur in government staff and elected officials. Regarding Downtown, for example, how many folks still refer to the 1979 BGADD plan entitled "Versailles ... A Step In The Right Direction"? Some of the recommendations in that plan are good, but they were not implemented.

7. Continue to promote tourism as directed by the Comprehensive Plan.

Some additional ideas include:

- Get the Chambers of Commerce to update their brochures and distribute them at tourist centers around the State and elsewhere.
- More and more vacationers use the Internet to get information about their destinations. Every effort should be made to improve and update Woodford County's presence

on the World Wide Web.

- Get the Woodford County Historical Society to organize more walking tours and excursions for visitors (and current citizens). Teach folks about the rich history of Versailles, Midway, the smaller communities, the old distilleries, and the working farms in the County.
- Get the Woodford County Historical Society or one of the municipal departments to assist in obtaining funding for the historic downtown buildings in Versailles, Midway, and Mortonsville. Even though great strides have taken place in the last two decades, there is still much preservation work to be done. Several corner buildings that once had towers should have those towers restored. Façade reconstruction is needed for several buildings that have been covered over.

8. Continue working to insure a future for agriculture in Woodford County.

To insure the unique settings for the small and rural communities, the farms around those communities need to remain viable businesses, providing income for the owners, jobs for the local residents, and tax revenues for the County. The County should continue to assist the local agricultural associations with their programs for local farmers. This assistance is very important today, given that many say the future of farming looks bleak due to trends in the agricultural market. Although this outlook is largely blamed on outside forces like NAFTA and changes in the tobacco industry, the local government can help by:

- Starting a program to purchase land to lease back to new farmers and to help agricultural incubator programs. Alternatively, land purchased by the County can be resold to farmers with restrictive easements on the property to permanently eliminate non-farm related uses. This program could be funded by a bond referendum. Many of the participants during the planning workshops ranked preserving open space and farmlands as a high priority.
- Seeking federal and state grants to purchase lands or easements to keep productive farmlands in agricultural use.

- Creating and implementing a Purchase of Development Rights Program(PDR) so that farmers and landowners can sell development rights to the County on a volunteer basis at prices determined by the market. This program could also be funded by a bond referendum. It is recognized that the purchased rights could either be “taken off the books” (never resold) or sold to other landowners or developers (at no profit to the County) should the County ever undertake a Transfer of development rights program.
- Working with the United States Department of Agriculture, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, and the Cabinet for Economic Development to explore marketing or labeling programs to increase the awareness of Woodford County agricultural products, adding value through name recognition.
- Encouraging the local agricultural and equestrian associations to have annual or semiannual Farm Tours to promote the needs and efforts by the agricultural and equestrian community to folks who are not accustomed to getting their boots dirty.

9. Continue the public-private dialogue.

Identify and address any remaining concerns the development community may have. Doing this will keep the regulators aware of current development trends and practices. It is also worthwhile to seek out relevant information from organizations such as the National Association of Home Builders on trends and economics of traditional neighborhoods. Take tours; sponsoring visits to peer communities and recent developments in the region can show local developers and elected officials both good and bad examples of growth, helping them make better decisions for the communities in Woodford County.

10. Offer financial incentives to follow the Plan.

Encourage private investment with public incentives: create low interest loan pools, waive fees, subsidize loans, offer city-owned or county-owned land, couple public improvements within the rights-of-way with private projects, provide free and pre-approved designs. Above all, cut red tape for developments which follow the plan. On the other hand, do not grant incentives such as these to developers that do not follow the plan.

Coordinate public capital improvements with adjoining private property owners. For example, expand the Renaissance City scope boundary to include Lexington Street so that as street improvements occur, the property owners on the street are encouraged to fix up existing buildings or build anew.

11. Adopt the use of “planning districts” for areas within the urban service boundaries.

Adopt planning districts for which the County can offer a fast-track approval process if applicants follow the Master Plan and Urban Code. The following requirements shall be provided:

- a public process
- an appropriate name for the district
- a complete master plan indicating:
 - the district boundary
 - street locations and widths
 - expected lot configurations
 - intended building footprints
 - parking locations for non-residential buildings (actual parking spaces need not be delineated).
- a regulating plan similar to those included in the proposed Woodford County Urban Code. The intent is for the Urban Code to apply to these planning districts.

A planning district may be created by a public process similar to the planning effort for Versailles and Mortonsville used to create this book, or a planning district can be proposed by a developer. The purposes of allowing planning districts is to

encourage coordinated development that is in keeping with the concepts explained in the Master Plan and Code.

To provide an incentive for developers to build what the community wants, design each district plan in a public process first, offering the developer free design services. To save them more money and further reduce the risk, create a specific “fast-track” approval process when they follow the master plan. The developers' savings can be spent on enhancing their project, providing more of a benefit to the whole community.

12. Building new streets and roads according to the Bluegrass Corridor Management Planning Handbook and the Master Plan.

The Bluegrass Corridor Management Planning Handbook is a Transportation Framework designed specifically for the region, build according to the Handbook.

13. Create a Woodford County Capital Improvements Plan and prioritize its projects.

A schedule of capital improvements will identify all projects and improvements that are linked to development. These include, but are not limited to, purchase of rights-of-way, under grounding of overhead utility lines, sewer extensions, water line extensions, road improvements, sidewalk construction, landscape enhancements, etc. Each project should include an estimated funding source (either public or private), a time schedule, and the person or entity responsible for implementation.

Part of a Bigger Picture Stay the Course

Our team has worked in a variety of North American cities and towns during the past decade; the Woodford Bluegrass is clearly exceptional. We realized that you have allowed us to participate in a historic process in your community.

The *Design for Tomorrow* Master Planning efforts and the accompanying Code used specific places as models. We realize the Master Plan is of regional relevance. The Master Plan is about how Woodford County can continue to grow in the Bluegrass Tradition of *Town and Country*-- on different scales, with Cities, such as Versailles and Midway, Small Communities such as Mortonsville, Nonesuch and Millville among others, and Rural Villages. The plan addresses how to grow in a responsible way that reduces undue growth pressure on the surrounding countryside and restores energy to the historic centers. The strategies presented in the individual chapters and this implementation section identifies specific regulatory changes as well as necessary future actions through public/private cooperation.

The Task Force and Citizen Leaders made it clear this was to be a model for sustainability. Now your efforts will be put to the hard test of implementation. Woodford Countians are surely up to continuing to the task. The extra persistence to realize the plan faithfully will pay off by revitalizing the historic centers and creating new places that are true neighborhoods in the Bluegrass tradition of community.

Victor Dover
October 2000

“Town and Country must be married, and out of this joyous union will spring new hope, a new life, a new civilization.”

Ebenezer Howard

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