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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Louisville’s challenge, and the purpose of this plan, is to balance projected population growth and economic development opportunity, the natural and recreational resources of the Floyds Fork Greenway, and the rural and visual character of the Floyds Fork area that residents have come to cherish. The plan recommends higher density development to occur in strategically located, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly “centers”; thus encouraging rural character and natural resources to be maintained in surrounding areas.
Findings

Continuation of past development trends will result in the fragmentation and alteration of the rural, natural, and agricultural resources outlined in this study. As an alternative to these trends, the concept for the Floyds Fork area’s future is designed to accommodate growth while sustaining rural resources and character. The concept is organized around a simple idea: that The Floyds Fork Greenway – a continuous, uninterrupted greenway along the Floyds Fork stream valley – should form an edge or “seam” between the expanding Louisville metropolitan area to the west and the more rural, environmentally sensitive lands to the east. Generally west of the Floyds Fork Greenway, public sector policies, regulations, incentives, and investments should encourage a “neighborhood development” pattern focused on small towns and villages, consistent with the direction for “centers” set by the Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan. Generally east of the Greenway, they should encourage “conservation development” forms that maintain rural character and protect sensitive resources (see Figure ES.1).

The Growth Framework divides the Floyds Fork area into “sub-areas” to which different growth and resource conservation strategies would apply (see figure ES.2):

1. The Neighborhood Development Area comprises areas of existing development and undeveloped lands located mostly west of Floyds Fork.
2. The Core Conservation Area is the Floyds Fork Greenway, within which a 3,200-acre regional park and conservation area is under development.
3. The Low Impact Development Area comprises environmentally sensitive lands and farmland mixed with some existing development east of Floyds Fork.
4. Centers of varying sizes corresponding to the Form District types (Regional, Town, or Village) would be located primarily within the Neighborhood Development Area, but could also be located within the Low Impact Development Area. The map below indicates four priority center locations derived from analysis conducted for this plan.

The following general strategies are proposed in each of these sub-areas:

**Neighborhood Development Area Policy Recommendations**

1. Create incentives to promote infill of existing development areas already served by utility and roadway infrastructure.
2. Working with utility providers and the Economic Development Department, develop techniques to fund infrastructure extensions needed to serve new development areas. Center development should be used to focus utility extensions and new development should extend from the new center locations.
3. Develop techniques and/or standards to integrate open space into the land use pattern (“retrofit” existing development areas; incorporate into new developments).
4. Use zoning tools to encourage neighborhood-serving commercial uses in neighborhood and village centers.
5. Maintain the Neighborhood Form District within the Neighborhood Development Area.

**Core Conservation Area Policy Recommendations**

6. Protect sensitive resources (Floyds Fork, 100 year floodplain, steep slopes, etc.) as a priority.
7. Adopt the Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan, including compatible multi-modal facilities (Louisville Loop Trail; trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods, etc.) as a part of Cornerstone 2020 comprehensive plan.
8. Review the current Floyds Fork Development Review Overlay District against current LDC environmental regulations to reduce conflicts and to enhance protection of natural resources.
Figure ES.1: Future Concept

Data Source: LOJIC
Low Impact Development Area Policy Recommendations

9. Review current LDC environmental standards to ensure that the integrity of natural and agricultural resources is maintained.

10. Review existing tools and create new development tools that encourage an integrated approach to development and resource conservation.

11. Strategically target utility and roadway infrastructure extensions to support desired development and limit growth impacts on sensitive resources.

12. Integrate significant agricultural and natural areas into the land use pattern through the use of existing and new development tools.

13. Develop standards and tools that preserve existing character while allowing for new development to occur.

Centers Policy Recommendations

14. Encourage compact, mixed-use development in existing and proposed centers. The location of additional and/or expansion of existing centers throughout the Floyds Fork area must consider:
   a. Sufficiency of roadway and sewer infrastructure to support center development
   b. Sufficiency of access and visibility from highway interchanges for proposed regional centers
   c. Sufficiency of access and visibility from major thoroughfares for proposed town and village centers
   d. Sufficiency of adjacent residential density and/or proven economic feasibility to support commercial development in the proposed center location
   e. Location and proximity of other existing centers
   f. Environmental suitability of proposed center site (preference should be given to locations west of the Floyds Fork)

15. Serve designated center locations with new infrastructure as a priority.

16. Designate center locations as future transit nodes in coordination with TARC.

17. Conduct studies as directed by Metro Council with the goal of form district changes for identified centers in accordance with this study and based on their intended size and function (Regional, Town or Village).

Next Steps

In an effort to advance the specific ideas raised in the Floyds Fork Area Plan, two major work groups should be convened over the next year:

1. Create a Planning Commission appointed committee to review and make specific recommendations regarding the development of compact, mixed-use activity centers within the Floyds Fork Area Study area as recommended by the study. Use the general guidelines within the Floyds Fork Area Study as a basis for this work.

2. Create a Planning Commission appointed committee to review and make specific recommendations regarding resources for sustainable development within the Floyds Fork Area Study area. Use the general guidelines within the Floyds Fork Area Study as a basis for this work.
Figure ES.2: Growth Framework

- Neighborhood Development Area
- Core Conservation Area
- Low Impact Development Area
- Centers (NOTE: does not represent actual size of center)
- Planned Town Center

Data Source: LOJIC
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The continued eastward expansion of suburban development from Louisville’s urban core will impact rural character and natural resources at the eastern edge of Jefferson County. The creation of the Floyds Fork Greenway, a nationally recognized park and open space initiative that has set aside over 3,200 acres of stream bottomland, is a major first step in preserving these resources for future generations. However, the Floyds Fork Greenway itself is likely to increase development interest in the surrounding area as future residents seek to locate within close proximity to its amenities.

Louisville’s challenge, and the purpose of this plan, is to balance projected population growth and economic development opportunity, the natural and recreational resources of the Floyds Fork Greenway, and the rural and visual character residents have come to cherish. The plan encourages higher density development to occur in strategically located, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly “centers”, essentially creating new small towns and encouraging rural character and natural resources to be maintained in surrounding areas.

The following pages describe a growth framework for the eastern fringe of the Louisville Metro region; possible locations for mixed-use centers based on the region’s current growth trends; and recommended design guidelines, strategies, and techniques for implementation.
Related Studies and On-going Initiatives

The Floyds Fork Area Study was developed in coordination with other related and ongoing planning initiatives to ensure consistency with current policy and specific projects already underway for the area. The strategies and recommendations contained herein coalesce and build upon these initiatives. The most significant related studies and initiatives are described below.

**Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan (1993 to 2000):**
In 1993, the Louisville Metro Government initiated a 7-year comprehensive planning process to identify policies and long-term direction for the region’s land use, parks and open space, transportation, and economic growth. The process developed an alternative, form-based zoning approach designed to address the limitations of conventional regulations through a flexible land use strategy based on the pattern of traditional neighborhood and commercial development. Form districts were implemented in the revised Land Development Code (LDC) to promote new development that complements the existing pattern and character of the built environment. In suburban communities across the Metro region, the designated form districts enhance the visual character of areas characterized by commercial “strip” development while promoting pedestrian, bicycle, and transit use. The recommendations of this Floyds Fork Area Study expand and build upon the form district concept established by Cornerstone 2020.

**The Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan (2008):** The Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan establishes the long-term design direction for a 3,200-acre regional park and greenway proposed for the eastern area of the Louisville Metro region. The plan includes active and passive recreation opportunities, a 27-mile portion of the Louisville Loop multi-purpose trail (see below), and natural and cultural resource areas that preserve sensitive landscapes for wildlife habitat and historic sites for public interpretation. The master plan is the next step toward implementing the vision set forth in the Louisville & Jefferson County Parks and Open Space Master Plan, completed in 1995 and part of Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan described above. Visionary in its scope and approach to sustainable design, the master plan seeks to increase biodiversity through habitat preservation and enhancement, improve water quality through innovative storm water management techniques, preserve agricultural land, and measure the regional sustainability costs and benefits of master plan proposals implemented over the long-term.

**City of Parks Initiative (ongoing):** On February 22, 2005, Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson announced a multi-million dollar, multi-year initiative to add thousands of acres of park land and protected green space to the Metro region. This is the most comprehensive effort to expand and improve Louisville’s park system since the creation of the Olmsted parks in the 1890s. The addition of land in the Floyds Fork corridor is the single largest addition to the park system since the expansion of Jefferson Memorial Forest in the 1970s. The City of Parks initiative includes:

- Acquisition and development of new park land
- The Louisville Loop trail extending over 100 miles around the community tying together Louisville’s diverse parks and neighborhoods
- An unprecedented level of capital investment to improve existing parks

The City of Parks Initiative represents a tremendous opportunity to integrate proposed mixed-use center design with the Louisville Loop trail, the Floyds Fork Greenway, and new neighborhood and community parks that serve the needs of Louisville’s growing population in the Floyds Fork area.

**Louisville Metro Complete Streets Manual (manual completed 2007, ordinance adopted 2008):** In keeping with the goals of the Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan, Louisville Metro Government adopted a “complete streets” policy and developed design guidelines for their imple-
The manual’s guidelines establish a system of streets that provide for safe and effective access to all users in a context-appropriate manner. Louisville Metro’s commitment to a “complete streets” policy is intended to promote the design of transportation corridors that are safe and convenient for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities. Implementing the recommendations of the Complete Streets Manual will ensure safe and equitable access to proposed amenities for the residents of existing and emerging neighborhoods within the Floyds Fork area.

**Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Retail Infrastructure Analysis (2007):** In October of 2007, Louisville Metro Government completed a retail infrastructure analysis that identified both served and underserved market potential areas for goods and services Metro-wide. Recommendations for future retail node locations were identified based on the findings of the analysis. Related conceptual building programs and financial feasibility studies were subsequently conducted. The most significant of the recommended retail nodes was located within the Floyds Fork area at Interstate-265 and Bardstown Road. Findings showed strong demand for a super community shopping center that expands the existing, designated Town Center form district immediately west of I-265.

**Building Louisville’s Local Food Economy (2008):** The Building Louisville’s Local Food Economy report identified recommendations and strategies for increasing sales of locally grown and produced foods in the Louisville Metro region. Strategies included recommended targeted investments, new policies and private practices, and infrastructure improvements to stimulate local supply and demand in local food production and distribution. The Floyds Fork area is Louisville Metro’s “farm belt” and offers great opportunity to realize local food economy goals.

**Transportation Studies in the Floyds Fork Area:** A number of recent transportation studies have been completed within and adjacent to the Floyds Fork area. These studies identify and prioritize roadway improvement projects such as intersection improvements and signalization, roadway widening and extensions, and new highway interchanges. Further study would be required to determine the impact of these projects on the development of the potential centers identified in this document. All transportation and roadway improvement projects, as well as future transportation planning efforts, should support the development of centers and their improved vehicular connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods. The recent transportation studies include:

- **Taylorsville and Billtown Roads Scoping Studies (2007):** These studies defined low-cost, short and long term solutions that address specific deficiencies as well as broader, more all-encompassing alternatives to improve corridor wide capacity and operations along Taylorsville and Billtown Roads. Similar to the I-64 interchange study described below, improvements to Taylorsville Road would have an impact on the potential village center along Taylorsville Road at Fisherville (see pages 18 to 19), as well the town center identified at Billtown at I-265 (see pages 18 to 19).

- **I-64 Interchange and New Connector Alternatives Planning Study (2008):** This study investigated a new I-64 interchange in the vicinity of Gilliland Road, along with a new or improved north-south connector road between Taylorsville Road and Shelbyville Road. This new interchange would have an impact on the potential village center along Taylorsville Road at Fisherville (see pages 18 to 19).

- **Cooper Chapel Road Extension (estimated completion 2012):** This planned extension of Cooper Chapel Road from Beulah Church Road to Bardstown Road would strengthen the visibility of and access to the potential village center identified along the east side of Bardstown Road (see pages 18 to 19).
The Floyds Fork area has a strong rural character and remains one of the most scenic parts of the Louisville Metro region. The Floyds Fork stream valley bisects the area north to south and remains, for the most part, in a natural state. A predominance of agricultural uses, interspersed with single-family homes on large lots (typically 5 acres or more in size), characterizes the area east of the Floyds Fork. Constrained less by natural topography, the land west of the Floyds Fork is generally more developed than to the east, with denser development pockets along and near Taylorsville Road, Bardstown Road, and Preston Highway. Still denser development lies just outside of the Floyds Fork area across the Gene Snyder Freeway to the west, and across Interstate-64 to the north (see Figure A.7 in Appendix).

The Floyds Fork area has a strong rural character and remains one of the most scenic parts of the Louisville Metro region. The Floyds Fork stream valley bisects the area north to south and remains, for the most part, in a natural state. A predominance of agricultural uses, interspersed with single-family homes on large lots (typically 5 acres or more in size), characterizes the area east of the Floyds Fork. Constrained less by natural topography, the land west of the Floyds Fork is generally more developed than to the east, with denser development pockets along and near Taylorsville Road, Bardstown Road, and Preston Highway. Still denser development lies just outside of the Floyds Fork area across the Gene Snyder Freeway to the west, and across Interstate-64 to the north (see Figure A.7 in Appendix).

Much of the Floyds Fork stream valley is part of the Floyds Fork Greenway (see description of master planning process above), a future 3,200-acre regional park that when fully constructed will consist of a wide variety of recreational amenities (multi-use recreational trails, regional and neighborhood parks, natural and cultural resource interpretation areas, etc.). First phase construction is planned to commence in the summer of 2010 and is anticipated to ignite increased development interest in the area.
The Planning Process

The Floyds Fork Area Study has been prepared using an open planning process that included extensive input from Floyds Fork area residents and stakeholders. As the process unfolded, it became clear that the protection of existing rural character and natural resources are two critical components that must be addressed. The development of recommendations that balance growth with these qualities was strongly desired.

Guided by Louisville Metro Government staff, the process included four general steps. Each step addressed a critical question in order to meet the plan’s objectives:

**Step 1: What are the issues?**
A thorough review of existing conditions, examination of planning trends, and informational interviews with stakeholders was conducted in this step to identify issues and opportunities important to the future of the Floyds Fork area. An understanding of the factors that contribute to rural character and the area’s general quality of life emerged from this step.

**Step 2: Where will growth occur? How do we manage it?**
Based on the data collected in step 1, a detailed analysis of growth trends was conducted to determine where growth and new development would likely occur over the mid- to long-term. This information informed the development of a growth framework for the area, specific strategies for managing future growth, and possible locations for future mixed-use development in this part of the Metro region.

**Step 3: What should development look like?**
Based on feedback from the area’s residents and key stakeholders, general design principles and guidelines were established that describe the desired development character for mixed-use centers, including connections to existing neighborhoods and the Floyds Fork Greenway recreational amenities.

**Step 4: How do we make it happen?**
Strategies and recommendations to implement the growth framework were developed in this final step. To facilitate an understanding among the general public about best practices for managing growth, Metro officials hosted an educational series in conjunction with this planning process. Experts spoke on the benefits of strategies such as transfer of development rights and conservation subdivision ordinances.
A SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FRAMEWORK

The primary goal of the Floyds Fork Area Study is to balance the protection of natural resources and rural character with future population growth and economic development opportunity. This section describes the Floyds Fork area’s existing conditions that contribute most significantly to rural character, as well as the area’s future growth trends in order to identify suitable recommendations that could potentially strike that balance. This review of existing conditions ultimately informed the development of the recommended Growth Framework described in section 2.3.
Existing Conditions: Rural Land Uses

The Floyds Fork area has a strong rural character, making it one of the most scenic parts of the Louisville Metro region. The landscape elements that contribute most to rural character (described here as rural land uses) include existing and future parkland, existing farmland, and environmentally constrained land. Measures to minimize the adverse impact of adjacent development on these land uses would allow them to remain intact in the long-term. The Floyds Fork area’s rural land uses are described below.

Existing and Future Parkland

Parks and permanently protected open space in the Floyds Fork area contribute significantly to its established rural character. Figure 2.1 illustrates the extent of existing and future parkland, as well as other significant open space resources, within the Floyds Fork area. As described in Chapter 1, the Floyds Fork Greenway is a major park initiative that is likely to shape the development pattern in this area for the foreseeable future. Totaling over 3,200 acres, the Floyds Fork Greenway includes land owned and managed by three separate entities: 21st Century Parks, a non-profit corporation dedicated to park building in the Louisville area; the Future Fund, Inc., a private land trust that is contributing land and trail easements; and the Louisville Metro Parks Department, which is contributing existing city parkland to the Greenway. Each partner will maintain ownership of their respective land holdings, while agreeing that all land within the Greenway (or portions thereof) will be publically accessible in perpetuity. Other significant open space resources located throughout the Floyds Fork area include:

- The Rolleigh Peterson Educational Forest, purchased in summer 2009 by the Kentucky Division of Forestry (KDF) and Louisville Metro Parks, will ultimately become a public park and walnut plantation.

- Additional parks and open space land is held by 21st Century Parks, Future Fund, and Louisville Metro Parks Department.

Existing Farmland

Existing farmland is a predominant land use found throughout the Floyds Fork area, and is perhaps the leading indicator of rural character. Totaling approximately 18,446 acres, the extent of farmland shown in Figure 2.1 is based on the tax assessed use of the property and does not necessarily indicate whether the land is in active production, left fallow, or vacant. As Figure 2.1 indicates, the largest contiguous areas of farmland occur east of the Floyds Fork. Farmland west of the Floyds Fork has become more fragmented over time due to the eastward expansion of the Louisville metropolitan area and access to I-265. Remaining agricultural uses in the area generally include corn, soybeans, cattle grazing, and sod.
Figure 2.1: Existing Parkland and Farmland

- Farmland (Based on Tax Assessment)
- The Floyds Fork Greenway
- Other Open Space

Data Source: LOJIC
Environmentally Constrained Land

Environmentally constrained land includes areas with development constraints such as floodplain, steep slopes, and karst landscapes. These resources perform important environmental functions and contribute to the Floyds Fork area’s rural character. The 100-year floodplain of the Floyds Fork and its major tributaries is generally limited to narrow valley floors. As indicated in Figure 2.2, steep slopes – those 20% and greater – occur mostly east of the Floyds Fork, and west of the Fork between I-265 and the plan area boundary north of Chenoweth Run. Karst landscapes are land areas prone to ground subsidence and sinkhole collapse caused by the dissolution of water soluble limestone bedrock. Though the entirety of the Floyds Fork area can be described as karst (see Figure A.8 in Appendix), impacts on the actual development potential of the land are highly localized. Ground subsidence and sinkhole issues can also be mitigated on a site-by-site basis if proper stabilization measures are taken. The Louisville Metro Government recently adopted a karst ordinance that defines the specific procedures applicants must follow when developing in karst prone areas.
Figure 2.2: Floodplain and Slope

- 100-Year Floodplain
- Steep Slope
- No Slope

Data Source: LOJIC
Existing Conditions:
Developed Land Uses

The predominant developed land uses in the Floyds Fork area are residential and commercial. Though residential land uses are located throughout the entirety of the area, the highest concentration of residential uses occurs west of the Floyds Fork. Residential uses east of the Floyds Fork consist primarily of homes on large 5-acre lots with convenient access to major arterial roadways. Commercial development is primarily located along major arterials such as Bardstown Road, Preston Highway, and Taylorsville Road, as well as concentrations near I-265 interchanges. The following sections describe the Floyds Fork area’s existing residential density, pending commercial and residential development projects, and likely growth trends based on this existing development pattern. Also described is the suitability of land for the development of mixed-use centers, a key feature of the Growth Framework described on pages 20 and 21.

Residential Density

Figure 2.3 illustrates the current pattern of residential development in the Floyds Fork area. To provide a sense of the relative density of development, each dot represents one residential address. The area between Bardstown Road and Preston Highway west of Floyds Fork supports the densest concentrations of residential development. Smaller pockets of residential density occur along, or in areas with convenient access from, major transportation corridors. Environmentally constrained lands east of Floyds Fork are characterized by scattered, large lot residential development.
Figure 2.3: Residential Density

NOTE: 1 dot equals one residential unit

Data Source: LOJIC
Current Form Districts
Looking at the form district map, Figure 2.3, the vast majority of the study area is located in the Neighborhood form district. This area is comprised primarily of residential use with some commercial at specific intersections. Based on Cornerstone 2020, non-residential development should be located within designated centers. Currently, there is no neighborhood center form district and therefore designations are recognized through the rezoning process.

The area along the Preston Highway corridor south of the Gene Snyder Expressway is a combination of Suburban Marketplace Corridor and Suburban Workplace form districts. These form districts include intense commercial use as well as industrial development. Their built form is characteristic of conventional strip-style commercial development and typical suburban business park development.

Current Development Pattern
Figure 2.4 shows the current development pattern of commercial and residential properties within the study area. Figure 2.4 provides information on residential building permits since 2003, all properties rezoned since 2000, all subdivisions approved since 2000, the location of sewer lines, and the existing boundary of the Development Review Overlay (DRO). The current development pattern for the study area is generally located near I-265 interchanges or along major transportation corridors such as Bardstown Road. The area between Preston Highway and Bardstown Road has seen the greatest amount of development due to a relative lack of environmental constraints and adequate access to sanitary sewers.

Likely Future Growth Trends
The existing pattern of development in the Floyds Fork area is a strong indicator of the likely pattern of growth in the long-term. The area’s growth has historically followed the extension of roadways and sewer mains. Residential and commercial development will likely continue to be concentrated west of the Floyds Fork due to convenient access to existing roadway, highway, and sewer infrastructure. However, significant improve-
Figure 2.4: New Proposed Development

- Rezoned (2000-2009)
- Approved Subdivision (2000-2009)
- Sewer Lines
- Floyds Fork DRO

Data Source:
Louisville Metro Planning and Design Services
Continuation of current development trends will result in the fragmentation and alteration of the rural, natural, and agricultural resources described in Section 2.1. As an alternative to these trends, the concept for the Floyds Fork area’s future is designed to accommodate growth while sustaining the rural resources and character that residents value so highly. The concept is organized around a simple idea: that the Floyds Fork Greenway—a continuous, uninterrupted greenway along the Floyds Fork stream valley—should form an edge or “seam” between the expanding Louisville metropolitan area to the west and the more rural, environmentally sensitive lands to the east (see Figure 2.5). Generally west of the Floyds Fork Greenway, public sector policies, regulations, incentives, and investments should encourage a “neighborhood development” pattern focused on small towns and villages, consistent with the direction for “centers” set by the Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The portion of this area north of Chenoweth Run and west of the Floyds Fork exhibits many of the same land constraints as the conservation area. Under the LDC, special care and best management practices will need to be utilized for development. Generally east of the greenway, they should encourage “conservation development” forms that maintain rural character and protect sensitive resources.

Land development policy should encourage “neighborhood development” west of the Floyds Fork (top), the conservation of the Floyds Fork stream valley (middle), and the protection of rural character and sensitive natural resources east of the Floyds Fork (bottom).
Figure 2.5: Future Concept

Data Source: LOJIC

Neighborhood Development

Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development

Low Impact Development

Neighborhood Development

DRAFT - 10/8/10
Cornerstone 2020 Centers Review

Guideline 2 of Cornerstone 2020 (Centers), guides the location of centers within the Neighborhood, Village, and Traditional Neighborhood form districts. The basic criteria is location at an intersection with one street classified as a collector level or higher and at least one corner is occupied by existing non-residential use. Using this criteria, the initial analysis of the study area focused on a review of existing and/or possible center locations.

The areas east of Bardstown Road are located within the Neighborhood form district. Analysis was conducted for this area based on the criteria discussed above and the results were used in identifying possible center locations. Additional review criteria was developed by the consultant team and used to further refine center locations (e.g. proximity to parks, infrastructure, environmental conditions, etc.).

The area west of Bardstown Road was not deemed appropriate for center development because the Beulah Church Road area has been developed primarily for residential use as well as the close proximity to the Highview Town Center to the north. In addition, a large amount of non-residential development located around and to the south of the Preston Highway and I-265 interchange is designated Suburban Marketplace Corridor and Suburban Workplace form districts. The development consists of light industrial, office, big box commercial, personal service establishments and restaurants. This area serves the needs of the local community and beyond.

Proposed Center Locations

Figure 2.6 illustrates proposed locations of higher density, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use “centers” – a development strategy that would allow rural character and natural resources to be maintained in surrounding areas and a key feature of the Growth Framework described on page 20. The proposed locations of mixed-use centers is based on a thorough review of existing conditions and trends including population growth, environmentally constrained land, proximity to existing and future parkland, roadway connectivity, as well as on-going planning initiatives. Below are explanations and justification for each proposed center location.

Bardstown Road at I-265

Bardstown Road and Interstate 265 with intersections of collector roadways such as Brentlinger Lane and with existing non-residential use lends to the idea of a larger scale center in this area. Based on the scale of recently approved and or proposed development, a designation of town or even Regional Center seems appropriate. The size and configuration of this center is still to be determined. The Retail Market Strategy that was approved by Metro Council and adopted as part of the comprehensive plan points to the need for Regional Center scale development in this area.

Further analysis was conducted using the minimum locational requirements developed for this study such as proximity to population centers, existing infrastructure, non-residential land uses, and the Bardstown Road and the I-265 interchange. In addition, the current trip levels along Bardstown Road justify the need for additional commercial development in this area. This study proposes a Regional Center level development based on the the criteria listed above.

Bardstown Road between Thixton Lane and Proposed Cooper Chapel Road Extension

Between Thixton Lane and the planned intersection of Cooper Chapel Road Extension and Bardstown Road. This location is at the intersection of an arterial (Bardstown Rd.) and a collector level roadway (Thixton and/or Cooper Chapel Rd.) with existing non-residential at one corner of the intersection at Thixton and Bardstown Road. The location of Old Bardstown Road parallel to and connecting with Thixton Lane supports the location of a small to possibly medium scale center such as a neighborhood or town center. The comprehensive plan acknowledges such intersections qualify as possible locations for an activity center. The Fern Creek Small Area Plan recommended the location of a neighborhood center at Bardstown Road and Thixton Lane. Further analysis was conducted using the minimum locational requirements developed for this study. Also, additional commercial property was rezoned to the north in close proximity to the Fern Creek Fire Station #2. This area is currently appropriate for a village or neighborhood center.

Billtown Road and I-265 Interchange

This location is at the intersection of an arterial (Billtown Rd.) and a collector level roadway (Gelhaus Lane) with existing non-residential at one corner of the intersection. The comprehensive plan acknowledges such intersections qualify as possible locations for an activity center. The scale of development, surrounding form district and existing environ-
Figure 2.6: Proposed Mixed-use Centers

Data Source: LOJIC
mental constraints suggest that this area would be appropriate for a small to medium scale center such as a neighborhood or town center. Further analysis was conducted using the minimum locational requirements developed for this study. Currently, the development potential exists on the north side of the interchange with limited available land to the south. This study proposes a Town Center level development at this interchange. The north side of the interchange currently contains a elementary and middle school with large residential developments nearby. The greatest potential for a future Town Center is on the northwest corner of the interchange with smaller scale development possible on the southeast corner of the interchange. Any development on the southeast corner would have the greatest potential to impact nearby parks and greenways.

Taylorsville Road and Taylorsville Lake Road (Fisherville)
This is an intersection of an arterial and a collector level roadway with one corner of the intersection occupied by non-residential use. The comprehensive plan acknowledges such intersections qualify as possible locations for an activity center. The scale of development, surrounding form district and existing environmental constraints suggest that this area would be appropriate for a smaller scale center such as a neighborhood or village center. Further analysis was conducted using the minimum locational requirements developed for this study. This study proposes a village or neighborhood center at this location. Figure 2.2 illustrates the amount of environmental constraints (streams, floodplain, etc.) that exist within the area. Based on the amount of environmental constraints in the vicinity, development would most likely be limited to smaller scale non-residential and mixed use buildings.

Growth Framework
Based on the above concept, the proposed Growth Framework divides the Floyds Fork area into “subareas” with different growth and resource conservation strategies (see Figure 2.7):

- The **Neighborhood Development Area** comprises areas of existing development and undeveloped lands located mostly west of Floyds Fork.
- The **Core Conservation Area** is the Floyds Fork Greenway, within which a 3,200-acre regional park and conservation area is under development.
- The **Low Impact Development Area** comprises environmentally sensitive lands and farmland mixed with some existing development east of Floyds Fork.
- The **Centers** of varying sizes corresponding to the Form District types (Regional, Town, or Village) would be located primarily within the Neighborhood Development Area, but could also be located within the Low Impact Development Area. Specific design standards that encourage environmentally responsible development within the Conservation Development Area should be adopted. Figure 2.7 indicates four priority center locations derived from analysis conducted for this plan.

The following general strategies are proposed in each of these subareas:

**Neighborhood Development Area**
- Promote infill of existing development areas already served by utility and roadway infrastructure as a priority.
- Explore techniques to fund infrastructure extensions needed to serve new development areas.
- Integrate open space into the land use pattern (“retro-fit” existing development areas; incorporate into new developments).
- Encourage neighborhood-serving commercial uses in centers.
- Maintain the Neighborhood Form District.

**Core Conservation Area**
- Protect sensitive resources (Floyds Fork, 100-year floodplain, steep slopes, etc.) as a priority.
- Adopt the Floyds Fork Greenway Master Plan, including compatible recreational uses (Louisville Loop Trail; trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods, trail head design, etc.).
- Apply the Floyds Fork Development Review Overlay District.

**Low Impact Development Area**
- Conserve the integrity of natural and agricultural resources.
- Encourage an integrated approach to development and
A SUSTAINABLE GROWTH FRAMEWORK

Figure 2.7: Growth Framework

- Neighborhood Development Area
- Core Conservation Area
- Low Impact Development Area
- Centers (NOTE: does not represent actual size of center)
- Planned Town Center

Data Source: LOJIC

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resource conservation (e.g., use of low impact design principles).

- Strategically target utility and roadway infrastructure extensions to support desired development and reduce growth impacts on sensitive resources.
- Integrate significant agricultural and natural areas into the land use pattern.
- Consider the use of the Village Outlying Form District with standards to maintain rural character.

Centers

- Encourage compact, mixed-use development in suitable locations.
- Serve designated center locations with new infrastructure as a priority.
- Implement guidelines for development character.
- Explore the potential to establish future transit nodes.
- Apply Center Form Districts appropriate to intended size and function (Regional, Town, or Village).
- Develop design standards for activity centers within the neighborhood form district.
DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR CENTERS

To build upon and further describe the intent of the Growth Framework, design guidelines for its key component – centers – are presented in this chapter. The guidelines describe the physical characteristics of centers and the implications of design and planning on the public realm. Their purpose is to coordinate the design direction of private development proposals (i.e., new housing projects, shopping center development, etc.) with public infrastructure investment (i.e., streets, sidewalks, parks and trails, etc.) in order to foster the creation of lively, pedestrian-oriented, and economically viable “places” where Floyds Fork Area residents and visitors can live, work, and play. Consistent with the Growth Framework, the design guidelines encourage compact, mixed-use development in strategic locations to protect the integrity of rural character and natural resources found throughout the Floyds Fork area.

The intent of the design guidelines for centers is to supplement or reinforce existing regulation already in place. The Land Development Code (LDC) provides some design standards for regional and town center types. However, design standards for village centers and activity centers within the neighborhood form district are lacking. Chapter 5 of the LCD does describe general standards for various form district components such as buildings and streets, but these aren’t consistently applied or necessarily specific to each form district type. Though the reader will note some overlap and repetition with the standards defined in the LDC, the design guidelines described on the following pages build upon and coordinate these standards in order to provide a complete picture of appropriate center development for the Floyds Fork area.

The design guidelines are organized in two parts. Based on best practices in urban design and place-making principles, the first part describes the complete menu of design guidelines conceived to create lively, pedestrian-oriented centers in the Floyds Fork area. The second part applies the guidelines to hypothetical development scenarios – or prototype plans – for regional, town, and village centers. Generated to illustrate the guidelines only, the prototypes are not based on any specific land area or properties, and they do not necessarily reflect an anticipated intensity of development. Local economic conditions will dictate how centers actually develop over time.
The Guidelines

Based on the input received from Louisville’s residents, development community, and other stakeholders, six general design principles were formulated to inform the definition of more specific design guidelines for centers. Each principle and its related series of design guidelines are described below. The guidelines are illustrated using photographs of exemplary development projects from other places, and are keyed to the corresponding guideline number. Diagramming techniques are also used to illustrate the guidelines where applicable. Subsequent pages in this section (pages 36 to 41) apply the guidelines to prototype plans for regional, town, and village centers. As described above, the prototype plans are not based on any specific land area or properties, and they do not necessarily reflect an anticipated intensity of development. Local economic conditions will dictate how centers actually develop over time.

Principle 1: Protect the environment

Regional centers should be developed in the most sustainable manner possible to protect natural resources and ecological systems, improve water quality, and reduce carbon footprint. Best practices for “low impact” site planning, “green” building design, alternative storm water management techniques, and provision of transit choice should be integrated into the development of all mixed-use centers. Guidelines to protect the environment in regional centers include:

1. Encourage energy efficient, green building design for all structures within regional centers.
2. Integrate best practices for storm water management into site design and the design of public open spaces.
3. Create “green” parking areas by integrating pervious paving and shade trees to reduce ambient heating.
4. Enforce the implementation of stream and floodplain buffers to mitigate development impacts related to water quality, flooding, and the Floyds Fork Greenway’s natural resources.
5. Integrate transit (i.e., regular bus service, bus rapid transit) to encourage alternative transportation choices between and among the downtown and other centers. At least two transit routes to various destinations should be considered.
Principle 2: Incorporate buildings and parking appropriate for the context

The design of buildings should consider the needs of the pedestrian rather than the vehicle, and respect local architectural vernacular and adjacent context. On-street parking should be encouraged, and on-street parking, should be located behind buildings to encourage the development of a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use center. Guidelines for buildings and parking include:

6. Provide parking at the rear of buildings (both surface parking and structured parking) to maintain sense of scale and street character. Ensure safe pedestrian access to and from parking areas.

7. Design parking garages with façade materials comparable to adjacent buildings.

8. Encourage shared parking among uses.

9. Group buildings along both sides of the street to form a public street space defined by walls.

10. Locate clearly identifiable building entrances at corners and at regular intervals along street frontages.

11. Encourage 50% ground floor transparency along commercial streets to avoid long, blank walls along street frontages.

12. Incorporate appropriate building size and mass to fit the center scale:

Regional Centers

• Commercial building floor space should be equal or greater than 400,000 square feet to serve a market area of 100,000 or more in population.

• “Big box” retail uses should generally be discouraged, though permissible if integrated into a “Main Street” or similar organizing element.

• Building height should generally be limited to five stories or fewer, though buildings up to 150’ feet in height (approximately 15 stories) is permissible. Residential, office, hotel, and a mix thereof are suitable uses within taller buildings.

Town Centers

• Commercial building floor space should be between 100,000 and 400,000 square feet.

• “Big box” retail uses should generally be discouraged, though permissible if integrated into a “Main Street” or similar organizing element.

• Building height should generally be limited to five stories or fewer.

Village Centers

• Commercial building floor space should be 150,000 square feet or less.

• The maximum single-building square footage should not exceed 35,000 sf; “big box” retail uses are therefore discouraged.

• Building height should be limited to three stories or fewer.
Principle 3: Provide pedestrian-friendly streetscapes

Streetscapes should be pedestrian-oriented and incorporate a wide variety of amenities such as street trees for shade, benches, and bike racks. Where appropriate, sidewalks should be sufficiently sized to accommodate the free movement of pedestrians, integrate sidewalk cafes, and foster vibrant street life. Guidelines for pedestrian-friendly streetscapes are described below.

13 Provide a sidewalk system that connects public streets, parking, and building entrances to the surrounding neighborhoods.
14 Establish zones for pedestrian movement, street furniture, and cafes.
15 Provide street trees for continuous canopy coverage.
16 Provide bicycle racks near building entrances and covered bus shelters where appropriate.
17 Provide pedestrian crosswalks at major intersections. Crosswalk paving surfaces should be distinguished from driving surfaces.
Principle 4: Integrate connected street and appropriately sized blocks
Regional centers should incorporate an interconnected network of streets that enables the efficient movement of pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and bus riders of all ages and abilities. Streets should connect to existing roadway infrastructure to facilitate access from adjacent neighborhoods. Blocks should be appropriately sized to accommodate the desired scale and character of development to create a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use center. The guidelines for streets and blocks are:

19 Establish a connected hierarchy of primary, secondary, and tertiary streets. Ensure street design accommodates two-way traffic.

20 Establish a system of alleyways to separate intensities of use and provide rear access. Connect alleys to the established street hierarchy.

21 Establish street connections to adjacent neighborhoods. Connect to adjacent existing streets where feasible (not illustrated).

22 Create an internal street system for lots greater than 2 ½ acres and connect to established street hierarchy.

23 Enforce and expand Louisville Metro’s complete streets policy to implement complete streets throughout centers. Complete streets facilitate the safe and efficient movement of pedestrians, bikers, bus riders, and automobiles.

24 Encourage a quality pedestrian environment by establishing maximum block sizes. A single block face should not exceed 600 feet in length; 300 feet is preferred in village centers. Smaller block faces are encouraged as building program permits to encourage a pedestrian-orientation throughout centers.

25 Integrate frontage roads parallel to major thoroughfares (major arterials) where feasible. Frontage roads separate regional from local traffic, eliminate the need for multiple curb cuts, and provide a pedestrian-friendly setting for adjacent buildings. Frontage roads should accommodate one-way traffic in the same direction as through traffic on the corresponding major arterial. Frontage roads should also incorporate parallel or diagonal parking where possible. Frontage roads should only be integrated into town centers when necessary to maintain the center’s pedestrian character and free movement of vehicular traffic. This guideline is not applicable to village centers.
Principle 5: Incorporate parks, plazas, and trails

Centers should integrate an interconnected network of parks and open spaces to serve the recreational needs of adjacent residents, foster social interactions, provide habitat for wildlife, and integrate natural systems. Trail linkages to nearby recreational resources and the Louisville Loop are encouraged. The specific guidelines to incorporate parks, plazas, and trails within regional centers include:

26. Provide parks or plazas within an easy 5-minute (1/4-mile) walk of residential areas (not illustrated).
27. Where feasible, create a trail system that connects to the Louisville Loop and other park resources. Link trails to commercial nodes within the regional center, and link regional centers to other types of centers throughout the Floyds Fork area.
28. Provide community gathering places at the entrances of public buildings and venues (theaters, cinemas, community centers, schools, libraries, etc.). Ensure adequate space is provided to accommodate public events and festivals.
29. Group buildings to form distinctive public spaces.
Principle 6: Integrate a mix of land uses

A mix of land uses supported by existing, local market conditions should be encouraged to provide a wide range of living, shopping, entertainment, and employment opportunities for area residents. The mix and extent of uses should be appropriate for the designated center scale and respect adjacent neighborhood context. Guidelines for land use are:

30 Encourage a mix of complementary uses. Appropriate uses within regional centers include:

- Retail uses such as national chain retailers, general shopping venues, entertainment uses, restaurants and cafes, and other convenience retail. Specialty shops like antique dealers, small hospitality facilities (i.e., bed and breakfast) add unique character.
- Office uses located in single use or mixed-use structures.
- Civic uses such as schools, community centers, libraries, post offices, and emergency services stations.
- Residential uses including high-density multi-family, medium density town homes, and lower density single-family detached homes.
- Public open space and recreational amenities such as parks, plazas, and squares.

31 Transition higher density core development to lower density surrounding uses. Other than high-rise towers, buildings or groupings of buildings should gradually “step” to avoid stark contrast in adjacent building height (not illustrated).

32 Limit free-standing auto-oriented uses (pad sites) to 15% of the mixed-use area. These uses should generally be located only at the periphery of the commercial core along major thoroughfares. Ensure that all buildings on major thoroughfares are connected to both an internal street and sidewalk system. This guideline is not applicable to town and village centers (pad sites should be discouraged).
Regional Center Prototype

Regional centers serve much of the retail, commercial services, entertainment, and employment needs of the Floyds Fork area. A focal point for surrounding neighborhoods of Floyds Fork and beyond, regional centers are defined as compact areas with a mixture of intense land uses developed around an identifiable commercial core consisting of a mixed-use "Main Street" or public open space as its primary organizing element. To facilitate regional access, regional centers should be located along major thoroughfares within easy access to major highway interchanges. As indicated in the Growth Framework (see Figure 2.7), the Floyds Fork Area Study identifies one potential regional center at the interchange of I-265 and Bardstown Road. The need for additional regional centers may be identified in the long term as local economic conditions allow. However, additional regional centers should be located west of the Floyds Fork stream valley and as close to the I-265 corridor as possible in order to maintain the desired rural character throughout the rest of the Floyds Fork area.

The largest of the center types, regional centers should incorporate a very wide range of land uses to create a lively “eighteen-hour” destination for the surrounding region’s residents, visitors, and employees. Regional centers should include: retail, office, civic, residential, and open space uses. Consistent with the development guidelines described in the LDC, the commercial floor space in regional centers should be greater than 400,000 square feet to serve a regional market area of 100,000 or more in population. To maintain a quality pedestrian-environment and development character, proposed “big box” retail uses should be integrated into a pedestrian-friendly “Main Street.” Auto-oriented retail uses (i.e., pad sites) should be located along major arterials only, and integrated along a parallel frontage road. High density residential uses should surround the commercial core with lower density residential uses at the center’s periphery. Parking should be accommodated in surface parking lots and structured parking where feasible. Appropriate for office or residential towers, the permissible building height is to a maximum of 150 feet (approximately 15 stories), though buildings five stories or fewer are encouraged. Open space and trail connections should be incorporated into town center design where feasible.

Developed according to the description above, a prototype plan for regional centers is shown at right. The intent of the plan is to conceptually illustrate the application of the guidelines for centers to the regional center type. The plan is not specific to any particular land area or properties, and does not reflect an anticipated intensity of development. Local economic conditions will dictate how centers actually develop over time.
The following illustration provides a graphic example of typical mass and scale of a village/town/regional center. This graphic is meant to display general concepts related to pedestrian and transit oriented development. This image does not constitute a specific regulatory control, but provides a general guide for development patterns within the study area.
Town Center Prototype

Serving as the focal point for surrounding neighborhoods and incorporated areas, town centers are defined as compact areas with a mixture of moderately intense uses developed around an identifiable commercial core consisting of a mixed-use “Main Street” as its primary organizing element. Town centers should be located at historic crossroads or at the intersection of major thoroughfares and collector roadways with strong, direct connections to surrounding neighborhoods. Adjacency to highway interchanges is permissible if local market conditions cannot support the larger regional center type. As indicated in the Growth Framework (see Figure 2.7), the Floyds Fork Area Study identifies one potential town center at Billtown Road near I-265. The need for additional town centers may be identified in the long term as local economic conditions allow.

Similar to regional centers, town centers should incorporate a wide range of uses to create a lively destination for Floyds Fork area residents and visitors. Appropriate uses within town centers include retail, office, civic, residential, and open space.

Consistent with the development standards described in the LDC (and as illustrated in Figure 3.2), commercial floor space should be limited to between 100,000 and 400,000 square feet in order to serve a market area of 25,000 to 75,000 in population. “Big box” retail uses should generally be discouraged in town centers, and higher density residential uses should surround the commercial core with lower density residential uses at the center’s periphery. Buildings five stories or fewer are encouraged in town centers. Parking should typically be accommodated in surface parking lots, though structured parking is permitted where feasible and necessary to maintain a pedestrian-oriented, “Main Street” character. Town centers within close proximity to the Floyds Fork Greenway should incorporate open space and trail connections to the Greenway and Louisville Loop Trail system where feasible.

Developed according to the description above, a prototype plan for town centers is shown at right. The intent of the plan is to conceptually illustrate the application of the guidelines for centers to the town center type. The plan is not specific to any particular land area or properties, and does not reflect an anticipated intensity of development. Local economic conditions will dictate how centers actually develop over time.
*The following illustration provides a graphic example of typical mass and scale of a village/town/regional center. This graphic is meant to display general concepts related to pedestrian and transit oriented development. This image does not constitute a specific regulatory control, but provides a general guide for development patterns within the study area.
Village Center Prototype

Village centers are compact areas with a mixture of relatively low intensity uses developed around an identifiable commercial core consisting of a “village green” as its organizing element. Consistent with the Floyds Fork area’s pre-1940 historic development pattern (e.g. the Village of Fisherville), village centers should be located at historic crossroads or along collector roadways. As indicated in the Growth Framework (see Figure 2.7), the Floyds Fork Area Study identifies two potential village centers: one along Taylorsville Road at the existing Village of Fisherville (not currently designated Village Form District in the LDC), and the second on the east side of Bardstown Road at the future extension of Cooper Chapel Road. The need for additional village centers may be identified in the long term as local economic conditions allow.

Village centers should incorporate a range of uses compatible with nearby rural neighborhoods. Village centers located within or immediately adjacent to the Floyds Fork Greenway could serve as park gateways or trail heads, with support functions for Greenway users such as bike or canoe rental facilities, fly fishing shops, and small eateries. Appropriate uses within village centers include retail, office, civic, residential, and public open space.

To encourage a development character suitable for village centers, the maximum single building footprint should not exceed 35,000 square feet. “Big box” retail uses, which generally exceed 35,000 square feet, are therefore discouraged in village centers. Higher density residential uses should surround the commercial core with lower density residential uses at the center’s periphery. Parking should be accommodated in surface parking lots located in the rear of buildings to maintain a pedestrian-oriented “village character.” Building design should be limited to three stories or fewer and reflect a traditional pattern of development and local architectural vernacular. Village centers within close proximity to the Floyds Fork Greenway should incorporate open space and trail connections to the Greenway and Louisville Loop Trail system where feasible.

Developed according to the description above, a prototype plan for village centers is shown at right. The intent of the plan is to conceptually illustrate the application of the guidelines for centers to the village center type. The plan is not specific to any particular land area or properties, and does not reflect an anticipated intensity of development. Local economic conditions will dictate how centers actually develop over time.
Figure 3.3: Village Center Prototype*

*The following illustration provides a graphic example of typical mass and scale of a village/town/regional center. This graphic is meant to display general concepts related to pedestrian and transit oriented development. This image does not constitute a specific regulatory control, but provides a general guide for development patterns within the study area.
Plans are turned into reality by taking action. A straightforward, three-pronged approach is proposed to implement the Floyds Fork Area Study:

1. Use existing provisions of the Louisville Land Development Code (LDC) to implement concepts such as centers.

2. Direct investments in public infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, etc.) to support desired growth patterns.

3. Explore how other strategies and tools, including regulatory, land conservation, and economic development approaches, can be applied to help implement the plan.
Existing LDC Provisions

Existing provisions of the Louisville Land Development Code (LDC) can be immediately applied to promote consistency of new development in the Floyds Fork Area with the Growth Framework. Key provisions include the Planned Development District option, Planned Residential Development, the Conservation Subdivision option, and various environmental resource protection requirements. Each is described below.

Planned Development District (Chapter 2 Part 8)
The intent of the Planned Development (PD) District is to promote diversity and integration of uses and structures in a planned development through flexible design standards. The goal is to make it easier for developers to implement the policy recommendations of Cornerstone 2020 specifically related to centers. This option should be used to establish centers in priority locations identified in The Floyds Fork Area Study. Other center locations may be considered by the Planning Commission provided that they meet specified criteria. The PD Design Guidelines required by the LDC as part of a PD Development Plan application should be consistent with Design Guidelines contained in Chapter 3. Incentives such as increased density, a greater range of uses, and more flexible design standards should be used to encourage the development of centers that meet the intent of this Area Plan.

The location of additional centers throughout the Floyds Fork area must consider:

- Sufficiency of roadway and sewer infrastructure to support center development
- Sufficiency of access and visibility from highway interchanges for proposed regional centers
- Sufficiency of access and visibility from major thoroughfares for proposed town and village centers
- Sufficiency of adjacent residential density and/or proven economic feasibility to support commercial development in the proposed center location
- Location and proximity of other existing centers
- Environmental suitability of proposed center site (preference should be given to locations west of the Floyds Fork)
Planned Residential Development (Chapter 2, Part 7)
The Planned Residential Development (PRD) zoning district promotes flexibility in design of residential developments in a manner that establishes conditions that fulfill the goals outlined in Cornerstone 2020. Specifically, the PRD district allows zero lot line, townhouse, cluster housing, reduced lot sizes and building setbacks, and other innovative designs which meet the Comprehensive Plan’s intent. Much like a conservation subdivision, a PRD is most applicable to sites that contain topographic and landform limitations or environmental constraints. In addition, housing style varieties serving the needs of people of differing ages or incomes and creating permanently protected open space makes PRD a possible tool that could satisfy the goals outlined within this study.

Conservation Subdivisions (Chapter 7 Part 11)
The Conservation Subdivision option was added to the LDC in July 2008. It is intended to achieve a balance between well-designed residential development, meaningful open space conservation, and natural resource protection by providing an alternative to conventional subdivisions. Conservation developments typically cluster the homes permitted in a conventional subdivision on smaller lots in order to preserve significant open space. This option should be encouraged in the Low Impact Development Area to achieve a balance between residential development and conservation of natural and agricultural resources. It can also be used within the Neighborhood Development Area as a way to integrate open space into the overall land use pattern. Incentives should be used to encourage use of the conservation subdivision option; the current provisions provide a density bonus of 10% for developments that dedicate 50% or more of the site for conservation purposes. Establishment of a “sliding scale” that increases the bonus based on the percentage of the site preserved from development could be considered as an enhancement to the current regulations.

Environmental Resource Protection
A number of LDC sections comprising approximately 100 pages address the protection of sensitive environmental resources, including:

- Development on Sites with Environmental Constraints (Chapter 4 Part 6)
- Steep Slopes (Chapter 4 Part 7)
- Waterways and Wetlands (Chapter 4 Part 8)
- Karst Terrain (Chapter 4 Part 9)
- Floodplain Management (Appendix 4G)
- Erosion Prevention and Sedimentation Control (Appendix 4H)
- Floyds Fork Special District (Chapter 3 Part 1)

These provisions should be applied to protect sensitive resources throughout the Floyds Fork area.
Infrastructure Investment

Investments in public infrastructure and services such as water, sewer, roads, and community facilities and services play a major role in shaping growth. In addition, the costs of providing public infrastructure and services can be greatly increased by sprawling, inefficient development patterns. The Floyds Fork Area Study establishes a framework for working with providers to coordinate infrastructure investments with desired patterns of growth and resource conservation. Key infrastructure types include public sewer and water, roads, and (potentially) transit service.

Public Sewer and Water

The Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) and Louisville Water Company (LWC) provide public sewer and water service, respectively, in the Floyds Fork area. Public sewer, in particular, is a key “driver” of growth that must be available if new developments are to achieve the maximum density of 4.84 units per acre permitted within the R-4 zone. Before the conclusion of 2010, Louisville Metro will be required to participate in the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit program administered by the Kentucky Division of Water (KDOW) on behalf of the US EPA. This program requires MSD and its co-permittees to more aggressively manage storm water quality over a period of time through regulations and community development (construction) oversight. KDOW’s expectations require that areas of new development and redevelopment manage the first three-quarter inches of rainfall through a variety of green infrastructure techniques focused on infiltrating storm runoff into the soil and away from sewers and waterways. Implementation of the MS4 standards will have positive impact on the Floyds Fork area and its surrounding ecosystem as future development occurs. As a result, Louisville Metro should encourage MSD and LWC to plan water and sewer improvements in the Floyds Fork area to meet the following priorities:

- Serve centers designated in accordance with The Floyds Fork Area Study as the highest priority.
- Serve new development within the Neighborhood Development Area as the next priority.
- Selectively provide infrastructure to existing and new development within the Low Impact Development Area if consistent with The Floyds Fork Area Study (e.g., conservation subdivisions).
- Generally preclude infrastructure extension to Core Conservation Area and areas with significant environmental constraints to development.

Roads

The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and Louisville Metro Department of Public Works and Assets are responsible for state and local roads, respectively, in the Floyds Fork area. Similar to public water and sewer, Louisville Metro should work with these agencies to coordinate roadway improvement projects with the Growth Framework defined in Chapter 2. Furthermore, Louisville Metro should levy the proposed System Development Charge to increase available funds for roadway improvements. Though previous transportation studies (see page 3) identified specific priorities for roadways within and immediately adjacent to the Floyds Fork area, general priorities for roadway improvements in support of centers and the context of this Floyds Fork Area Plan should be based on the following factors:

- Improve mobility and access to centers designated in...
accordance with The Floyds Fork Area Study as the highest priority;

• Improve mobility and connectivity within the Neighborhood Development Area as the next priority;

• Selectively improve mobility and connectivity within the Low Impact Development Area if consistent with The Floyds Fork Area Study (e.g., to serve conservation subdivisions or designated centers); and

• Generally preclude roadway improvements in the Core Conservation Area and areas with significant environmental constraints to development unless needed to provide a critical linkage.

**Future Transit Services**

Transit service within Louisville Metro is provided by the Transit Authority of River City (TARC). The current density of development in the Floyds Fork area is not sufficient to support transit service. However, the Growth Framework creates the potential for future transit service to the proposed compact, mixed-use centers. Such service could become a viable transportation option for residents if the recent escalation in gas prices proves to be a harbinger of an “energy-constrained” future. Louisville Metro should begin working with TARC to explore scenarios for providing future transit service to the Floyds Fork area.
Other Strategies and Tools

While application of existing LDC provisions and coordination of infrastructure investments with The Floyds Fork Area Study Growth Framework are extremely important, they are not by themselves sufficient to ensure that the goals of the plan will be achieved. The possibility that future land use in the Floyds Fork area will consist of undifferentiated sprawl is a particular concern. A number of strategies and tools have been successfully used in other parts of the country to address growth issues similar to those facing Floyds Fork. These strategies and tools can be generally grouped into three broad categories: new regulations, land preservation techniques, and “asset-based” economic development strategies. Louisville Metro should work with partners to explore the potential for applying strategies and tools within each category to help achieve the goals of The Floyds Fork Area Study.

New Regulations
Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Rural Design Guidelines are potential new regulatory tools that should be investigated by Louisville Metro for possible use in the Floyds Fork area.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR): This market-driven approach has been used by many jurisdictions to encourage land development and preservation in “the right places.” A TDR ordinance allows property owners within designated “sending areas” (i.e., natural, agricultural, or other areas earmarked for land conservation) to sell development rights to owners of properties within designated “receiving areas” (i.e., areas designated for higher density development). The seller agrees to place a permanent conservation easement on his/her property while the buyer receives the right to develop at a higher density than otherwise allowed by the underlying zoning. A TDR program in the Floyds Fork area could potentially be used to shift development that would otherwise occur within the Core Conservation or Low Impact Development Area to designated centers.

Rural Design Guidelines: Participants in the planning process expressed a desire to maintain Floyds Fork’s existing rural character in new developments. This goal is addressed in the Design Guidelines for Centers (Chapter 3.0), particularly in the context of Village Centers. Establishing additional guidelines for larger developments located outside of centers should be considered as a way to encourage greater compatibility with the traditional landscape and heritage of Floyds Fork than is typical of conventional suburban development. Such guidelines could address design elements such as building mass and relationship to the street, treatment of vehicular circulation and parking, and landscaping through an incentive-based approach. These guidelines could be used to revise the Village Outlying Form District to make it a more meaningful tool (see Stakeholder Issues in the Appendix).
Land Preservation
Maintaining farmland, wooded stream corridors, and other natural resources that help define Floyd Forks' rural "sense of place" will require concerted land preservation efforts through public/private partnerships. The structure for these partnerships is already in place. 21st Century Parks is working with Metro Parks and Future Fund to establish over 3,000 acres as the Floyds Fork Greenway. The Louisville and Jefferson County Environmental Trust is charged with protecting land for future generations through voluntary cooperative programs. As part of its mission, the Trust explores the use of private land preservation techniques such as donation and purchase of conservation easements and land, including a 76-acre property in the Floyds Fork watershed that will be conserved and managed as a nature preserve. These efforts should be continued and extended to promote voluntary land preservation by private landowners, focusing on agricultural and natural lands within the Core Conservation and Low Impact Development Areas. A variety of voluntary tolls are available including fee simple acquisition, conservation easements, and limited development options.

Fee Simple Acquisition: Public agencies or nonprofit land conservation organizations such as the Future Fund and the Louisville and Jefferson County Environmental Trust can acquire land from willing property owners through purchase or donation.

Conservation Easements: Land can be permanently preserved and remain in private ownership through the donation of conservation easements to a public entity or private land conservation organization. Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) is a form of conservation easement used to permanently protect working farmland while providing the farmer with a monetary return on his/her investment. Counties throughout the United States have used PACE programs to protect significant amounts of farmland; as one example, Lexington/Fayette County has protected 200 farms totaling almost 23,000 acres as of July 2009.

Limited Development: This approach typically involves a private land trust working with a landowner to provide for low-impact development of appropriate areas while permanently protecting valuable natural resource areas through a conservation easement. Similar to the donation of land or conservation easements, owners can realize significant tax benefits by forgoing the full development potential of their properties.
Asset-Based Economic Development

Asset-based economic development builds on the intrinsic resources of a place to create products and services within the local economy. The concept goes beyond land preservation to actively promote the economic contributions made by assets such as agricultural lands, parks and natural areas, and cultural and historic resources. These contributions range from agricultural production to tourism based on natural and cultural resources to quality of life amenities that make a place attractive to live and operate a business. From this perspective Floyds Fork’s unique characteristics offer significant existing and potential economic benefits for the Louisville Metro region that can best be realized through strategic approaches to leveraging key assets. Opportunities include the retail demand generated by a growing population, the potential to build a local food economy, and the potential for Floyds Fork Greenway to become a major regional attraction.

Retail Strategy: As the population of the Floyds Fork area grows there will be increasing demand for retail development to serve that population. This demand represents an opportunity for community-serving businesses that reduce the need for residents to drive elsewhere for goods and services. It is also a potential threat to the unique character of Floyds Fork within the Louisville Metro region if it takes the form of commercial “strip” development that is indistinguishable from the typical, auto-oriented suburban development pattern. The 2007 Louisville/Jefferson County Retail Infrastructure Analysis identified a “gap” in almost all retail categories within a study zone encompassing the Floyds Fork area. To meet this gap the study suggests that a “super” community shopping center could be developed in the vicinity of the I-265/Bardstown Road Interchange. Rather than being allowed to proliferate along highway corridors, new retail development should be concentrated in the mixed-use center locations identified in this plan (e.g., Bardstown Road/I-265), and possibly in other locations that can be demonstrated to meet specified criteria (see page 44). An incentive-based approach can be used to encourage quality development that creates a distinctive sense of place by applying the center design guidelines described in Chapter 3.

Local Food Economy: The Floyds Fork area has a strong agricultural heritage and continues to support the largest concentration of farmland in Louisville Metro/Jefferson County. Building Louisville’s Local Food Economy, a 2008 study sponsored by the Louisville Metro Economic Development Department, identified strategies to increase farm income for local farmers through expanded food sales in Louisville. According to the 2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture, Jefferson County had 526 farms (41,061 acres) of 20,014 farms in the 23-county region surrounding Louisville addressed by the study. In the 2007 Census these figures decreased to 475 farms totaling 32,296 acres.

Based on GIS data, the Floyds Fork area has approximately 9,375 acres of agricultural land. Retaining agriculture as an integral part of the area’s land use pattern requires that farming remain viable as a business. The 2008 study recommended strategies such as increased advertising and awareness of local foods, development of local food processing and distribution networks, and agritourism2 to boost the agricultural economy. Applying the study recommendations to Floyds Fork will require working with area farmers to determine the strategies that best “fit” the local economy. For example, Jefferson County’s top three agricultural sectors as ranked by sales are nursery/greenhouse production, horses, and livestock; fresh produce that could be marketed to Louisville’s urban population currently ranks low on the list. The relatively high ranking of livestock, on the other hand, suggest development of local meat processing facilities as a
potential economic development strategy (an idea that was raised in the Jefferson County farmers’ focus group conducted for the 2008 Local Food Economy Study). Agritourism is another potential direction given the proximity to the Louisville population center and development of the Floyds Fork Greenway as a regional attraction.

**Floyds Fork Greenway:** When developed with a range of active and passive recreational amenities and incorporated into the countywide Louisville Loop Trail, the Floyds Fork Greenway will be a major draw for residents and visitors to the Louisville Metro region. Numerous studies have demonstrated that trails improve the local economy by increasing nearby property values and resulting tax revenues, increasing expenditures by residents on recreation, providing business opportunities, and attracting tourists who spend money on lodging, food, and recreation-related goods and services. In addition, the greenway’s quality of life contributions will enhance the region’s attractiveness for businesses and workers.

The direct economic potential of the Floyds Fork Greenway can best be realized by focusing visitor-oriented businesses in centers that function as “gateways” to the park. The proposed mixed-use centers identified in this plan – Fisherville, Billtown Road, and Cooper Chapel Road/Bardstown Road – are well located to capture this potential. Development should be of an appropriate scale and character consistent with the design guidelines in Chapter 3.

**Work Plan**

The work plan below establishes a process to implement the framework of ideas developed within the Floyds Fork Area Study. This framework provides guidance on the issues outlined during the study process. Chapter Four recommends the establishment of two committees by the Louisville Metro Planning Commission with the responsibility for review and advice on issues of “centers development” and “green development” in 2010. The following work plan outlines the major issues to be reviewed by the committees.

**The Centers Development Committee: Work Plan Issues**

- Center location and boundary
- Pedestrian/Transit Oriented Design, Street Character/Complete Streets, and Trail Head Design
- Center Design (Size/Scale and Open Space Integration)
- Incentives for development/redevelopment in Centers
- Infrastructure

**The Green Development Committee: Work Plan Issues**

- Work with MSD on Stormwater Issues (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit)
- Review of current DRO Guidelines
- Review Stream Buffers/Trail Corridors
- Low Impact Development Integration and incentives
- Green Building Incentives
- Open Space, Agriculture and Conservation Design
- Development Compatibility (road design and view shed protection)

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2. 2002 Kentucky legislation creating the Office of Agritourism (an interagency office of the Department of Agriculture and the Tourism Department) defined agritourism as “the act of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operations for the purpose of enjoyment, education or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.”

3. A 2004 study of the Virginia Creeper Trail (a 35-mile shared biking/walking trail in SW Virginia) found that trail users were almost evenly split between locals (47%) and non-locals (53%). From November 2002 to October 2003 visitors accounted for approximately $2.5 million in recreational spending. Nonlocal visitors generated an estimated $1.6 million during this period and supported approximately 30 jobs in the region.