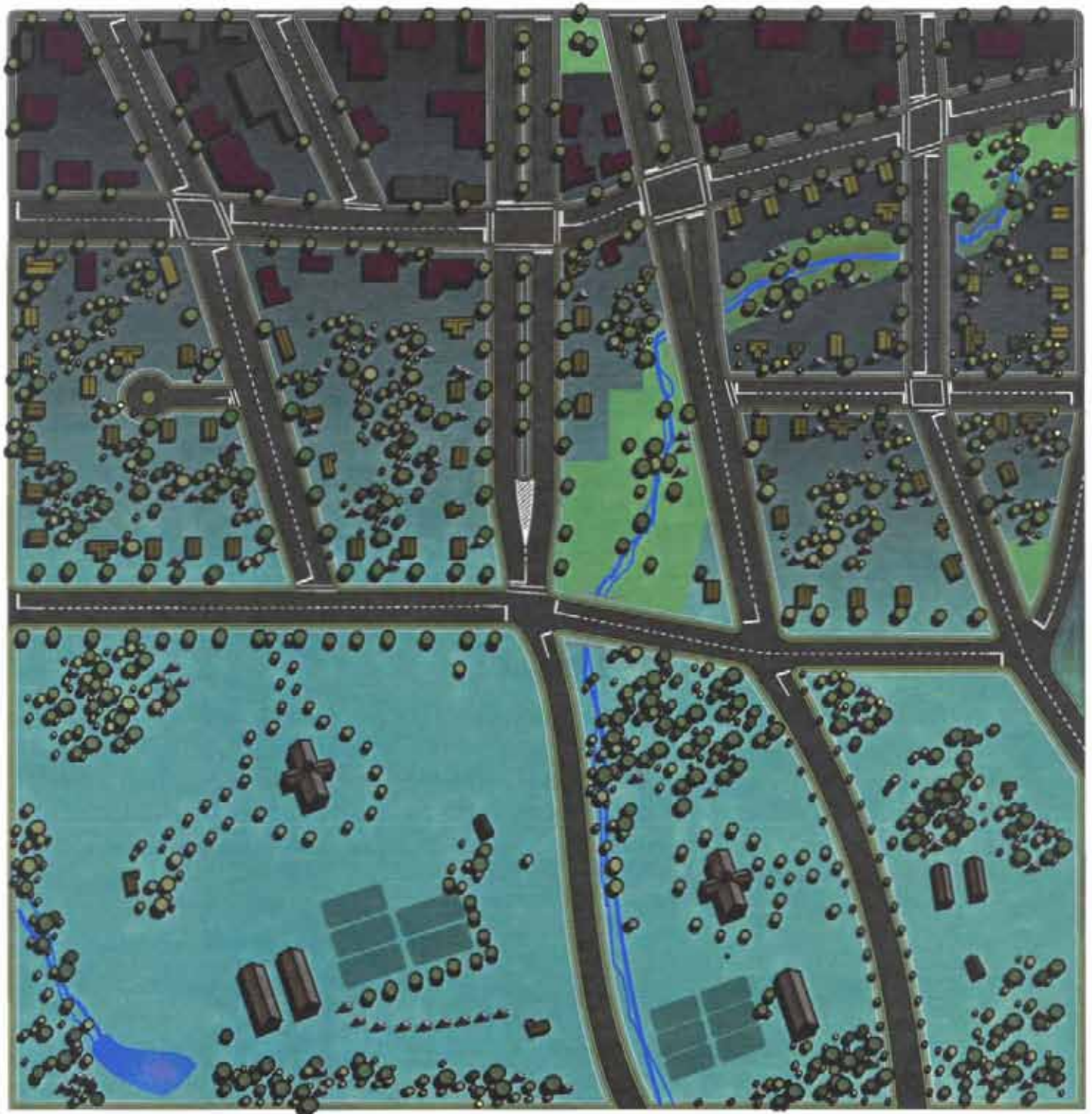


# GREENSPACE PLAN



LEXINGTON-FAYETTE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

LEXINGTON-FAYETTE COUNTY  
GREENSPACE PLAN

LEXINGTON-FAYETTE GREENSPACE COMMISSION

H. POWELL & CO., INC. ● BETH K. STEWART

APPROVED BY L.F.U.C.G. PLANNING COMMISSION AUGUST, 1994

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## GREENSPACE PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"The Bluegrass" is a phrase that conjures up beautiful images in our minds of the special region we feel proud and privileged to call "home." Lexington-Fayette County is the heart of Bluegrass country, and the people who live and work here are stewards of a landscape of world renown. The Greenspace Plan translates their concerns for protecting the unique identity of the Bluegrass into recommendations for public and private action.

We all know what is special about the Bluegrass, and what is at stake – our inheritance from the generations who built the Bluegrass; the sharp distinction between city and countryside; the historic homes, churches, farmsteads, and rock fences; the land, trees and water that are the foundation of farming and the fabric of pleasant city life. Yet time cannot stand still. Lexington-Fayette County is experiencing a healthy growth rate with attendant social and economic transformation. The very qualities that draw new residents and new businesses to the Bluegrass are threatened by this success. The challenge that is met by the Greenspace Plan is to protect our remarkable natural and historic heritage within an urban / rural form that is adapted to the needs of the future.

### GREENSPACE – A CITIZEN INITIATIVE

Lexington-Fayette County citizens were the motivating force behind this Greenspace Plan by expressing their concern, in countless public meetings, surveys and the media, over the slow erosion of the Bluegrass identity and the loss of greenspace. Citizens directed this planning effort through the Greenspace Commission, established by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) in December 1990. The 64 citizens who served on the Commission and its subcommittees represented diverse interest groups:

The farm community	♦	The horse industry
The business community	♦	Land use planning
Earth sciences	♦	Landscape architecture
Conservation / environmental groups	♦	The historic preservation community
Builders / developers	♦	Realtors
Tourism interests	♦	The Urban County Council
The public at large		

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*Develop a greenspace system that preserves the identity of the Bluegrass and provides a framework for regional planning.*

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This is the mission statement of the Greenspace Commission and the first goal of the Greenspace Plan. What do these terms – "greenspace" and "Bluegrass identity" – mean?

## **GREENSPACE – OUR BLUEGRASS HERITAGE**

The Bluegrass identity is what makes Lexington-Fayette County different from every other place in the world. **"Greenspace" refers to the essential characteristics of our community that give the Bluegrass its special identity and quality of life.** Greenspace is more than horse farms, parks, and rock fences; it also encompasses natural environments such as streams, sinkholes, and the Kentucky River; valuable resources such as prime soils; buildings that recall the community's founding and history; the experience of the city or countryside from an automobile; and the ability to travel safely by bicycle or on foot. The "greenspace system" refers to the rich fabric of these qualities woven together throughout the community, giving it a coherent identity.

## **DEFINING BLUEGRASS IDENTITY WITH RURAL AND URBAN LANDSCAPE TYPES**

The Greenspace Plan evaluates these many features for protection on the basis of their contribution to the Bluegrass identity. It was important to avoid personal preferences and recognize the full diversity of landscapes and resources valued by Bluegrass residents. This was done by recognizing the different and distinctive types of rural and urban landscapes that are defined by a combination of natural and cultural resources.

- **RURAL LANDSCAPE TYPES** ♦ *The Kentucky River and Tributary Creek Valleys*  
*General Agricultural* ♦ *Horse Farm* ♦ *Rural Settlements*
- **URBAN LANDSCAPE TYPES** ♦ *Pre-World War II Neighborhoods*  
*Post-World War II Neighborhoods* ♦ *Central Business District / Other Commercial Areas*

## **GREENSPACE BENEFITS**

The benefits of creating a comprehensive greenspace system go far beyond leisure and aesthetics, and are fundamental to the future economy and quality of the environment of this community and the entire Bluegrass region. Protecting our remaining greenspace is not a luxury; it is a necessity for maintaining the quality of life that Bluegrass residents have always enjoyed and will continue to desire for the future.

### **Benefits to the Overall Economy:**

*Encourages tourism*  
*Supports business attraction and retention*  
*Catalyst for Downtown revitalization*  
*Allows more cost-efficient public improvements*

### **Benefits to the Agricultural Economy:**

*Maintains the land and water resource base*  
*Helps the next generation of farmers*  
*obtain farmland*  
*Reduces problems for farms caused by*  
*urban encroachment*  
*Diversifies the rural economy*

### **Benefits to Environmental Quality:**

*Safeguards water quality*  
*Supports biodiversity in the urban and*  
*rural area*  
*Educates present and future stewards*  
*of the environment*

### **Benefits to Community Planning:**

*Improves experience of auto transportation*  
*Creates bicycling / pedestrian system*  
*Buffers incompatible land uses*  
*Provides more diverse recreation*  
*opportunities in the city and county*  
*Transforms greenspaces into classrooms*



The Greenspace Plan has two parts: the **Physical Plan** (Chapter IV), with greenspace concepts, policies, and project proposals, illustrated on maps and in words, for the rural, urban and Downtown area; and the **Implementation / Action Plan** (Chapters V, VI), with the specific steps that must be taken to accomplish these proposals.

## **THE GREENSPACE PHYSICAL PLAN**

### **GENERAL GREENSPACE CONCEPTS**

There are **three basic components of the greenspace system**:

- *Resources* – Natural and cultural characteristics of the Bluegrass identity that were mapped in the greenspace inventory and evaluated for greenspace protection (see list below).
- *Sites* – Particular locations and properties with significant Bluegrass resources that should be preserved and might be appropriate for public access.
- *Linkages* – Linear corridors such as streams, roads and abandoned railroad rights-of-way that can create an interconnected greenspace system throughout the urban and rural area.

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### **GREENSPACE RESOURCES THAT WERE INVENTORIED & MAPPED**

**Natural Resources:** Primary & secondary soils ♦ steep slopes, palisades ♦ botanical areas  
sinkholes, caves, springs ♦ major tree stands ♦ streams, floodplains, reservoirs, the River

**Cultural Resources:** Historic buildings, outbuildings ♦ rock fences ♦ historic districts  
rural settlements ♦ horse farms, general agricultural farms ♦ public and private open space

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The Plan proposes **three levels of increased protection** for greenspace lands:

- *Level 1: Resource protection* would protect significant resources on private property, where no public access or public ownership is contemplated. This would be the majority of greenspace lands, especially in the rural area – large areas of farmland, environmentally sensitive resources, historic resources, etc.
- *Level 2: Visual access and protection* would preserve and enhance resources along designated road corridors and areas that are visible to the public, as a way to increase public enjoyment of the rural and urban area and protection of the most visible aspects of the Bluegrass identity without changing land ownership.
- *Level 3: Public parks and trails* would allow increased public access to greenspace. Property or easements would be acquired and owned by the public.

## **RURAL AREA GREENSPACE PLAN**

### **DESIGNATED AREAS FOR RURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION POLICIES**

We can no longer take for granted that the rural landscape will continue unchanged in the face of modern social and economic pressures. To maintain a healthy agricultural economy, we must preserve the working agricultural landscape intact – the soil, the water, the past investment in buildings, and the structure of the entire community. The



Plan identifies and maps **two types of areas as a guide to match preservation policies and techniques to the significance of the Bluegrass rural resources in these areas.**

- *Significant Rural Resource Concentrations* are specific locations scattered throughout the rural area where resources significant to the Bluegrass identity are clustered together, such as a historic building with a tree stand and rock fence, or a stream with steep slopes and sinkholes.
- *Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas* are large, consistent landscapes containing a greater density of Significant Rural Resource Concentrations. These rural areas have the greatest sensitivity to any development intrusion or change, and need a greater level of protection than current land use regulations provide.
- ▶ *Implementation:* Appropriate for Implementation Level 1 (private ownership, no public access) and Level 2 (visual access) protection actions. Conduct a major outreach effort to property owners to encourage conservation easements and purchase of development rights. Adopt land use and design standards through techniques such as greenspace overlay zoning.

## RECREATION AND TOURISM IN THE RURAL AREA

This plan envisions increased tourism and recreation in keeping with traditional rural public access opportunities, and in balance with the need to preserve security and privacy for farmers and residents. Increased public recreation, in turn, will build public support for the rural greenspace plan.

- **Focus Areas** are generalized areas that are the very best examples of the rural Bluegrass identity, with the greatest concentration of valuable resources representing the various Bluegrass landscape types. Small area plans are needed to develop strategies for long-term protection and to consider opportunities for increased public recreation through tours, trails, and acquisition of new park properties in limited locations. The Focus Areas are:
  - ▶ **North Elkhorn Creek**, from I-64 to the Scott County line, encompassing Russell Cave, Paris Pike, Briar Hill Park and Bryan Station Spring
  - ▶ **Boone Creek** area, from Sulphur Well Road to Clays Ferry
  - ▶ **Kentucky River Palisades** area, from Boone Creek to Tates Creek Road
  - ▶ **South Elkhorn Creek**, from the South Elkhorn community to Versailles Road
  - ▶ **The Old Frankfort Pike** area.
- **Tours:** Public roads provide wonderful opportunities for driving and bicycling tours highlighting the special qualities of the Bluegrass. These should be enhanced with pull-offs, signage, brochures, and support services.
- **Trails:** Off-road hiking, bicycling, and horse trails should be created with community consent. For example, the abandoned CSX (C&O) railroad right-of-way could become a trail extending from inside the urban area to the rural settlement of Pine Grove and beyond.
- **Staging areas:** Locations for support services and facilities: small parking lots, restrooms, places to buy groceries and gas or rent canoes, restaurants, overnight accommodations. Staging areas should primarily be within public parks and **historic rural settlements** such as Athens and Fort Spring, where these opportunities can become a tool for renewing small businesses. Support facilities must not compromise the integrity of the rural area. Small area plans are essential to identify locations of staging areas and to specify the type of development and design guidelines that will protect the rural character of each site. The Greenspace Plan has detailed policies to ensure that inappropriate commercialization will not occur.

## URBAN AREA GREENSPACE PLAN

### URBAN GREENSPACE RESOURCES

*Remaining natural areas and environmentally sensitive resources* show the natural identity of predevelopment Lexington and provide open spaces and experiences of nature within the urban environment. *Urban cultural resources* convey Lexington's cultural identity and are a visible reminder of the city's development patterns and economic and social influences. These resources are proposed to be protected, re-established, and made accessible within the greenspace system.

### URBAN GREENSPACE SITES

The Plan identifies 66 sites that should be investigated for public greenspace acquisition, easements, or regulatory techniques to protect significant natural and cultural resources, provide additional open space and recreation opportunities, and accommodate support facilities such as parking and picnic shelters for the greenspace bikeway/trail system.

### URBAN GREENSPACE LINKAGE SYSTEM

A key part of the Plan will create an interconnected system of trails, bikeways, natural areas, and attractive streets throughout the city, for non-auto commuting and recreational travel and for visual and environmental enhancement of urban life. **The system has three linkage purposes: visual; environmental; and recreational/commuting.**

**Visual linkage** will enhance Lexington's Bluegrass image and the visual experience of traveling on city streets.

- *Existing roads:* Evaluate high quality roads like East Main/Richmond Road in the Ashland area. Develop design guidelines for retaining their special qualities during improvements. Apply guidelines to enhance roads that currently do not project a positive image.
- *Corridor planning:* Integrate greenspace system planning and corridor planning. The Greenspace Commission has recommended to the LFUCG Corridors Committee a list of roads to consider as a high priority for greenspace corridor enhancement. The character of these arterials forms the impression residents and visitors receive of the city.
- *Design of new roads:* Create a new vision, with regional agreement, of what our transportation corridors should be like. This design vision should weigh greenspace goals – protection or enhancement of natural and cultural resources, accommodation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic – equally with safety and cost-efficiency of auto travel. We must find planning and design solutions that can accomplish all of these purposes.
- *Interstate corridor protection:* Project a stronger image of the Bluegrass identity to interstate travelers. Protect and highlight significant greenspace resources that are visible from the interstates. Apply design guidelines to development at interchanges.
- *Parkways:* Design new streets adjacent to streams and wooded areas so that these natural features are retained to create a parkway effect, especially along arterials and collectors.

**Environmental linkage** interconnects natural areas, parks, and open spaces, which will support the healthy functioning of ecosystems and the benefits they bring to urban development – improved water quality, more wildlife, less flooding, and nature-oriented



recreation. The trail linkage proposals below will also create environmental linkages.

**Recreational / commuting linkage** will make it more feasible and attractive to travel within the city without relying on a car. Development of a *comprehensive on-street and off-street bikeway/pedestrian system* linking greenspace resources with homes, schools, parks, and jobs is an organizing concept for the Greenspace Plan. In the past, LFUCG bikeway planning has mainly dealt with on-street bikeways for adult commuters. Recreational biking and the need for safe off-street routes for youth are transportation concerns receiving increasing attention. We must begin to secure opportunities now, and gradually build a system that will be on the cutting edge of urban design.

- **Interconnected On-street and Off-street Trails:** The Plan identifies many opportunities for off-street linkages along streams, rural road remnants, parks and abandoned railroad rights-of-way. Where these are not available, especially within the older urban area, enhancement of streets for greenspace trails and bikeways is proposed. The on-street and off-street trails would be interconnected to create a citywide system.
- **"Collector" and "local" greenspace routes:** As with a road system, the Plan maps major collector greenspace routes that travel across town, between districts and neighborhoods, linking major recreation, retail and entertainment attractions. Local routes would be mapped and developed over time, to create finer scale greenspace linkages within neighborhoods, to local shopping areas, elementary schools, and neighborhood parks.
- **Urban-to-Rural Connections:** The rural areas proposed for tours, trails, and parks should be linked where feasible to the urban greenspace linkage system with bicycle routes and hiking, walking, jogging, and horse trails, funneled through "safe crossing points" at the urban edge.
- **Creating the Trails System:** The trails and recreation facilities along drainageways should be planned with property owners to integrate their concerns about greenway protection and public access. The LFUCG must be vigilant to take advantage of opportunities for easements and acquisition, with a long-term goal of corridor protection.
- ▶ **Example: The proposed South Elkhorn/Hickman/North Elkhorn trail system** will become a major recreational attraction. It runs generally parallel to Man O'War Blvd., sweeping across the entire southernmost suburban area. It will be a mix of interconnected on-street and off-street trails, following natural streams, remnants of farm and rural roads, streets, and park trails. The system will connect the rural settlement of South Elkhorn, Waveland State Park, the City reservoir, and Veterans and Jacobson Parks, with offshoots to neighborhood parks and schools, Fayette Mall, Tates Creek Centre, and Shillito Park.

People from anywhere in the city could bike down to the southern trail or use the park-and-bike facilities. The southern trail would also be a route from the city to scenic rural areas, such as from Harrodsburg Road out to Parkers Mill Road and the South Elkhorn Creek area, or along the abandoned railroad route southeast under I-75.

## **DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE CONCEPTS**

This section of the Greenspace Plan offers general concepts and proposals that can be developed in more detail during the upcoming Downtown planning effort. Downtown Lexington should become the urban focus of the greenspace system and the central hub of the linkage system.



## MAJOR PUBLIC GREENSPACES

Strategic locations of new or renovated major greenspaces would encourage infill revitalization along Main Street, encourage greater use of Downtown by making it more attractive to pedestrians, and develop a unified, positive image of Downtown.

- ▶ **A new major public open space** is needed between Thoroughbred and Phoenix Parks.
- ▶ **The Ben Snyder block redevelopment** creates a significant opportunity to create a dramatic greenspace "center" to Downtown, complementing Phoenix Park.
- ▶ **Cheapside Park and the greenspace around the Courthouse** should be improved to make it more attractive and to encourage pedestrian and bicycle linkage to the north.
- ▶ The vacant property on the **southwest corner of the planned Newtown Pike extension and Main Street** is an opportunity to create a "gateway" to Downtown.
- ▶ The parking lot property at the **southeast quadrant of the High Street and Martin Luther King Blvd. intersection** should become a major greenspace related to the Transit Center.

## DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE LINKAGES

Downtown is the hub of the greenspace linkage system, both as a central destination and a switching point for cross-town routes. Linkage improvements within Downtown will increase pedestrian / bicyclist use and activity. The Plan identifies the best streets for potential connections within Downtown and to the University of Kentucky and surrounding neighborhoods. The Downtown Plan should determine how these linkages would be developed.

## IMPLEMENTATION / ACTION PLAN

The Greenspace Plan proposes a wide array of potential implementation techniques for greenspace and discusses the actions and responsibilities for evaluating these proposals further, selecting the ones that will be feasible and effective, and accomplishing them.

### THE ROLE OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC ACTIONS

Although many implementation strategies in the Plan center on public actions and acquisition, actually most of the greenspace system will always remain in private ownership. Lexington-Fayette County residents and property owners have been the stewards of Bluegrass lands for centuries, and much of the continued protection of the Bluegrass identity will be in their hands. There are many proposed **implementation strategies that relate to private properties**. These fall into three categories:

- *Incentives* such as conservation easements or purchase of development rights – voluntary measures that provide benefits to property owners in exchange for their willingness to forgo development or to develop in a way that protects resources.
- *Financial or technical assistance* programs, to help individual citizens or organizations accomplish their own greenspace-related goals, such as the ISTE grant to the citizens group Lexington-Frankfort Scenic Corridor, Inc.
- *Regulation* – amendments to the Land Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance where necessary to ensure preservation of significant greenspace resources on private property.

In general, **the role of public acquisition** of greenspace land will be limited to those situations where public access will be allowed or where public ownership is the only way to adequately protect greenspace values. **There should be a very strategic and limited use of public funding for land purchases and maintenance.** Potential greenspace sites and linkages will be further evaluated by the prioritization process below, to decide which properties will be investigated for acquisition or other protection measures. Greenspace sites should also be reviewed for potential acquisition as part of the LFUCG Park and Recreation system.

## RECOMMENDED GREENSPACE IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES

### *Greenspace Tools and Techniques:*

#### **Current Techniques:**

Purchase of Land  
Strengthening of Agricultural District and Right-to-Farm Laws  
Conservation / Scenic / Facade Easements  
Larger Minimum Lot Size for Agricultural Zoning  
Growth Management Planning through the Comprehensive Plan

Nature Preserves Designation  
Local Historic Districts  
Revision of the Zoning and Development Review Process

#### **New Techniques:**

Purchase of Development Rights (PDR)  
Greenspace Zoning / Overlay District(s)  
Flexible Land Use Regulations

### *New Greenspace Organizations:*

- *Non-profit organization within the LFUCG:* Through the Greenspace Stewardship Fund, the LFUCG could hold title to greenspace land and easements. An advisory board would give direction to the Urban County Council on how Stewardship Funds would best be spent.
- *Non-profit, non-governmental organization:* A second non-profit corporation would be independent of the LFUCG, with representatives of the Greenspace Commission and various organizations on its Board. This corporation could act as a land trust, accept easements and financial contributions, and hold title to property both within and outside the county.

### *Greenspace Funding Sources*

The Plan suggests further evaluation of these **potential funding sources and incentive programs** for greenspace acquisition, development and management:

Tax Incentives for Donation of Lands  
Billboard Tax  
Increased Park Fees  
Inheritance Tax Reform  
Hotel/Motel Tax Increase  
ISTEA Funds

Targeting of Other Existing Sources –  
Rails to Trails  
Land and Water Conservation Funds  
Kentucky River Authority Funds  
Kentucky Heritage Council  
Community Rivers & Streams Grants

### **Implementation Techniques Summarized by Property Types:**

The proposed urban linkage system will require a creative combination of many different types of implementation techniques. To help public agencies apply the proper policies and strategies, these are organized in the Plan according to the type of property that presents an opportunity for greenspace: stream corridors, on-street bicycle / pedestrian trails, abandoned railroad corridors, and remnants of rural roads within the urban area.



## PRIORITIZING GREENSPACE

The many site and linkage opportunities proposed for the Greenspace system must be prioritized for implementation to help the Greenspace Commission and LFUCG make decisions about allocating resources, especially funding for property acquisition. The Plan proposes a simple, two-step checklist system that balances Greenspace values, which will be pursued over the long-term, with short-term pragmatic concerns.

- ▶ **Values Checklist:** Each property receives a score based on the number of significant greenspace resources and functions it has. Use the Values Checklist at least every five years, in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- ▶ **Practical Checklist:** Properties are scored to reflect feasibility considerations, such as whether they are on the market, threatened by change, or have immediate funding opportunities. Use the Pragmatic checklist yearly or as often as needed. Coordinate with the LFUCG capital budgeting process.

The checklists can also be used to identify properties in need of protection for the Comprehensive Plan Update and in small area plans. They can be a guide for evaluating zoning / development review procedures and drafting ordinance amendments.

## CRITICAL NEXT STEPS

The Greenspace Plan effort has been a major accomplishment, but there is still work to be done to detail the Physical Plan proposals, evaluate the array of choices for implementation, research and draft ordinances, and adopt them. The Greenspace Commission and the LFUCG must pursue this with the same energy and commitment that is reflected in the Plan. There are several immediate priorities. These studies provide an opportunity to involve affected property owners.

- **The most urgent priority – incorporate greenspace values and proposals into the development review process.** *This effort should begin immediately, so that important greenspace opportunities are not lost in the development process.*
- **Coordinate planning for urban storm drainage improvements with greenspace linkages along stream corridors:** The Divisions of Planning and Engineering should coordinate planning for cost-effective flood management and improved floodplain protection, combining greenspace and detention purposes, protection of natural / cultural features in stream corridors, land acquisition and improved maintenance arrangements, and trail access and development.
- **Do prototype small area plans for developing areas** to detail the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan proposals and identify the specific properties and protection measures involved. Plans are needed for the Reynolds property, Viley / Leestown Road area, etc.
- **Incorporate Greenspace Plan proposals in every other planning effort,** whether the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown study, Transportation Plan, Paris Pike and other Small Area Plans, Historic Preservation Plan, corridor plans, etc.
- **Pursue demonstration projects** through special events and strategic improvements, such as along the Squires bikeway, the proposed South Elkhorn / West Hickman linear park, or at Coldstream, to show Lexington-Fayette citizens how the greenspace system will work.
- **Refine rural area proposals:** Define boundaries of the Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas. Do small area plans to identify locations, use and design guidelines for staging areas and to detail resource protection and recreation strategies for Rural Focus Areas.



## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CREATING THE GREENSPACE SYSTEM

Although the Greenspace Commission has taken leadership in creating the greenspace system, many existing local and regional public agencies have activities that intersect with greenspace proposals. Greenspace implementation will require new ways of thinking within public agencies, leading to new policies for planning, infrastructure improvements, and maintenance. To be truly effective, efforts to carry out this Plan must be undertaken jointly. The contributions each agency should make are listed in the Plan.

### DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Commissioner's Office ♦ Division of Planning ♦ Division of Historic Preservation

### OTHER LFUCG AGENCIES

Division of Parks and Recreation ♦ Division of Engineering ♦ LFUCG Corridors Committee

### REGIONAL AGENCIES OUTSIDE THE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Metropolitan Planning Organization ♦ Fayette County Public Schools

Kentucky River Authority ♦ Kentucky American Water Company ♦ University of Kentucky

## INTEGRATION WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

***With the adoption of this plan, greenspace will become one of the defining urban design and rural preservation concepts of the Comprehensive Plan.*** The Greenspace Goals were included in the Goals and Objectives presented by the Update Committee. In the Greenspace Plan are many detailed suggestions for integrating its proposals with the Comprehensive Plan. The Greenspace Plan also has useful background information for the Update effort, such as identification of the Bluegrass resources in the rural and urban area that are worthy of a higher level of protection.

## GREENSPACE EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In both the short and long term, education is the key to creating a greenspace system that enhances all aspects of our daily lives.

- *Education about Greenspace Values and Benefits:* Build a base of public support for implementing the Greenspace Plan through a proactive educational effort.
- *Education for Property Owners about Preservation Techniques:* Provide information to private property owners about greenspace techniques, such as conservation easements, to help them decide whether to pursue them.
- *Education about the Bluegrass Heritage:* Use greenspace sites for hands-on learning, to meet KERA requirements. Bluegrass residents, especially children, must be knowledgeable about their natural and cultural heritage if it is to remain a vital part of their lives.

## GREENSPACE REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Preservation of the Bluegrass identity must become a regional concern. Surrounding Bluegrass counties should be encouraged to undertake greenspace planning and work with the Greenspace Commission and LFUCG on several regional initiatives:

- ▶ **Heritage tourism** programs, tours, and joint marketing.
- ▶ A plan for trails, parks, restored locks, recreation facilities, and land protection along the **Kentucky River**.
- ▶ A **rails-to-trails corridor** on the abandoned railroad right-of-way from Lexington to Mount Sterling and beyond.

## **CONCLUSION**

Our Bluegrass heritage is not simply a rock fence here or a historic plaque there. The Bluegrass is an ensemble of land, water, buildings, and people, and to keep it we must preserve the fabric of the whole. This Plan recommends incentives for private land stewardship and models for public action that, together, will protect the essence of the Bluegrass for generations.

Many communities affected by growth have become divorced from their natural and cultural heritage. These placeless, faceless communities could be Anywhere, U.S.A. The Greenspace Plan embodies the resolve of Lexington-Fayette citizens to preserve and enhance our special Bluegrass way of life.

# SECTION 1: THE GREENSPACE PLAN

## I. GREENSPACE PLAN OVERVIEW

### ROLE OF THE GREENSPACE COMMISSION AND CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

Lexington-Fayette County citizens have been the motivating force behind the effort to plan for and create a greenspace system for the community. This Greenspace Plan effort grew from concerns, voiced by citizens in "Speak Out Lexington" meetings and the Bluegrass Tomorrow survey, about protecting greenspace and the community's special identity. The greenspace planning effort was spearheaded by a citizen Greenspace Commission, which was established by ordinance in December of 1990.

In all, 64 citizens representing varied interest groups served on the Greenspace Commission and the four subcommittees that supported its work. This citizen commission directed the plan from the earliest stages of drafting goals, deciding the scope of the plan, and inventorying resources, to the final stages of recommending a physical plan and funding mechanisms, developing a method for prioritizing greenspace acquisitions, and drafting this document. Background information about the Commission is in Section 2, Chapter I.

The commission also sought additional citizen involvement, through open meetings, a survey of rural property owners, and presentations to neighborhood, special interest, and governmental groups during the preparation of the Plan draft. So strong is the community interest in greenspace that there was little controversy during the planning, and the final Plan has a consensus of support from all Commission members.

### OVERVIEW OF THE GREENSPACE PLANNING PROCESS AND GUIDE TO THE GREENSPACE PLAN

**Section 1** of this document contains the recommendations of the Greenspace Plan. **Section 2** is a guide to the planning process, for those interested in the background studies and evaluations that were the basis for the Plan. The process is also summarized below, as a preview to the contents of the Plan. The "**Planning Process**" flow chart in Figure 1 gives a sense of how a very complex subject was divided into related steps.

The first step was to answer the questions, "What is 'greenspace'? What does 'the Bluegrass identity' mean?" (Chapter II) and to write goals that would explain what greenspace planning was meant to accomplish. The overall goal became the **mission statement** of the Greenspace Commission and this Plan: *"Develop a greenspace system that preserves the identity of the Bluegrass and provides a framework for regional planning."* By thinking through the **goals and objectives** (Chapter III) the Commission came to understand and agree upon the breadth of topics that needed to be woven together to achieve this mission.



The Commission next initiated a **resource inventory** to catalogue and map all of the natural and cultural resource factors and characteristics that relate to greenspace. The information included in the inventory is summarized in Figure 5, Chapter IV; notes about the inventory mapping and about information that was not available to include in the inventory are in Section 2, Chapter II.

Another step in gathering background information was to carry out a **mail-back survey of rural property owners** to learn their hopes and concerns about rural conservation, development, and greenspace. Other community surveys that could give insights into **public opinion and values** about greenspace were also reviewed. Results of these surveys are summarized throughout the Plan and more fully in Section 2, Chapter I.

The Commission developed a draft outline of the Greenspace Plan and the **scope of work** for the remainder of the planning process as a guide for **consultant selection**. Consultants were chosen through the standard competitive process of advertising for proposals, submission of written proposals by the consulting firms, narrowing of the field to four candidates based on the proposals, and final selection after oral presentations. Consultants H. Powell & Co., Inc. and Beth K. Stewart were selected.

The next step was to develop the Greenspace Physical Plan, described in Chapter IV, which begins with **concepts** of what the greenspace system should look like and what it should accomplish in both the rural area and the urban area. An **evaluation of inventoried resources** identified locations of resources that should be incorporated in the greenspace system (Section 2, Chapter III). As a part of the evaluation of resources, the Commission realized that the rural and urban area are not uniform, but have several distinct **landscape types**. Rural landscapes include the Kentucky River and Tributary Creek Valleys, General Agricultural, Horse Farms, and Rural Settlements. Urban area landscapes include Pre-World War II Neighborhoods, Post-World War II Neighborhoods, and Central Business District / Other Commercial Areas. The Commission identified the different resources that play a role in the character of each type of landscape (Chapter II).

To further develop the Greenspace Physical Plan, the many **opportunities for greenspace sites and linkages** were evaluated (Section 2, Chapter III). *Sites* are particular locations with significant resources or open space potential that could be preserved as a part of the greenspace system. *Linkages* are corridors such as streams, roads and abandoned railroad rights-of-way that can create an interconnected greenspace system throughout the urban and rural area. The resulting **Greenspace Physical Plan**, which maps the greenspace system sites and linkages for the urban area, Downtown, the rural area, and urban-to-rural connections across the urban service boundary, is described in Chapter IV.

The Commission researched various **methods for implementing the greenspace system** by reviewing state law, greenspace programs in other communities, and many publications about ways to protect and acquire greenspace properties. The methods selected as feasible and appropriate for this community are described in Chapter V.

The Greenspace Physical Plan lists many opportunities for creating a greenspace system, and Chapter V describes an array of implementation methods. How would choices be

made about which sites and linkages should be acquired for greenspace protection first, and which implementation methods would be appropriate for each property? A **prioritization process** was developed by the Commission, based on the values about greenspace expressed in the Goals and Objectives and criteria related to the resource inventory (Chapter V). Also, all of the greenspace linkage opportunities were classified as various **property types for implementation methods**. The different protection and management techniques that will be most effective for each type of property – whether stream corridor, road, or abandoned railroad right-of-way – are listed in Chapter V.

The **Action Plan** in Chapter VI describes the specific actions that must be pursued to implement the Greenspace Plan. First, it summarizes the **critical next steps** that must be taken to incorporate greenspace protection into the development review process and to detail the Greenspace Physical Plan proposals. The **agencies and organizations that will play a role** in creating the greenspace system and the **responsibilities proposed for each** are listed. Issues raised in the Greenspace Plan that should be **incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan Update** are discussed. Finally, Chapter VI recommends the **educational programs and regional coordination** that must be pursued for the greenspace effort to be successful in the long term.

## **GUIDANCE FROM PREVIOUS LEXINGTON-FAYETTE COUNTY PLANS**

The concept of "greenspace" is a synthesis of many different planning concerns, from greenways to bikeways. The Lexington-Fayette County community has pursued several planning programs in the past that relate directly to creation of the greenspace system. The Greenspace Plan was an opportunity to consider these previous separate reports within a broader context, and to find the connections and common goals they shared. It was an opportunity to review the recommendations of plans that have not been formally adopted by the Urban County Government, such as the Corridor Enhancement Study and the Greenway Plan, and bring forward those recommendations that are relevant to the greenspace concept and that will help to implement details of the greenspace system.

The following plans were consulted during the planning process for background information, policy direction, and implementation methods: the 1988 Comprehensive Plan; the Corridors Enhancement Study (1992); the South Broadway Corridor Plan (1990); the Greenway Plan (1992); and the Priority 1 Bicycle Facilities Plan (1992). The information that was relevant to the planning process from each of these plans is discussed more fully in Appendix B.

There have been many past planning studies that have envisioned efforts such as the Greenway Plan, stormwater drainage plans, Bicycle Facilities Plan, Corridor Enhancement Study, Stone Fence Survey, and historic surveys as linked pieces in a puzzle that could create a comprehensive system to protect the community's special identity and resources. The Greenspace Plan has become the vehicle for actually combining proposals from these efforts into one overall plan.

## **ADOPTION OF THE GREENSPACE PLAN**

The adoption process for this Plan is related in Section 2, Chapter I. The Greenspace Goals were incorporated in the draft Goals and Objectives for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The final version of the Greenspace Plan was adopted by the Urban County Council on \*\* as an element of the Comprehensive Plan.



## II. GREENSPACE AND THE BLUEGRASS IDENTITY

This Plan is the first step towards meeting the charge given the Lexington-Fayette Greenspace Commission: *to develop a greenspace system that preserves the identity of the Bluegrass.* "Greenspace" and "Bluegrass identity" – these are terms that are becoming familiar to Lexington-Fayette County citizens. Yet what do these terms really mean? This introductory chapter to the Plan **explains what a greenspace system is, what is meant by the "Bluegrass identity" that would be preserved through greenspace, what the greenspace system might look like, and the benefits it could bring to the Lexington-Fayette community.**

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A great majority of regional residents (85%) **strongly identify with "the Bluegrass"** as the place where they live. When asked **what makes their community different or special**, community and neighborhood values were most important, and **open space and rural character** were mentioned second.  
– *Bluegrass Tomorrow Survey, MC2, 1991*

Three-fourths (76.1%) of the people who answered the Fayette County Rural Survey believe that **our county's rural character is unique**, compared to other areas around the U.S.  
– *Fayette County Rural Survey, Roberts & Kay, Inc., 1993*

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### GREENSPACE – OUR BLUEGRASS HERITAGE

"*The Bluegrass*" is a phrase that conjures up beautiful images in our minds of one special region, the place we feel proud and privileged to call "home." The Bluegrass identity is what makes Lexington-Fayette County unique, different from every other urban and rural community in the world. "*Greenspace*" is a word for the various features that make up our Bluegrass identity, that together evoke this special place. Here are a few of our Bluegrass greenspace features: (This portion of the text should be accompanied by photographs of specific places)

- ◆ *Agricultural farms and horse farms; the patterns of fields and of rock and plank fences; horses running over a curve of emerald grass; cattle cooling themselves in a pond; the seasons marked by the labor and mellowing colors of tobacco;*
- ◆ *Abundant water flowing over and within limestone, seeping into sinkholes, gushing out of springs and fountains, filling streams that wind through backyards and farms, quickening over stone steps and waterfalls, and cutting gorges to the Kentucky River below its spectacular palisades;*

- ◆ *Trees arching over country roads and city roads; trees marking fence rows and the edges of subdivisions; open savannah woodlands and their stately trees preserved in parks and yards; tangles of trees following the sinuous courses of creeks and making wild places in the city; steep forests plunging towards the River;*
- ◆ *Walks in historic neighborhoods, where the close relationship between front door, porch, and sidewalk remind us of a time when cars were less important; a glimpse of a farmhouse, barns and outbuildings framed in the landscape; special visits to the stately landmarks of our shared culture, like Keeneland Race Course, Ashland, the Hunt Morgan House, the Red Mile Harness Track, and Waveland; familiar sights of the more humble historic fixtures of our community like churches, country stores, and tobacco warehouses;*
- ◆ *The grand old and new government buildings, libraries, and schools, the parks, cemeteries and gardens, the restaurant courtyards and Downtown plazas, all the places, the greenspaces that make daily life in the Bluegrass special.*

## WHAT IS GREENSPACE?

**"Greenspace"** refers to the essential physical characteristics of our community that give the Bluegrass its special identity and quality of life. These characteristics include open spaces and natural environments, valuable resources such as farmland, and development patterns and buildings that recall the community's founding and history. They also include parks and recreation opportunities, the experience of the city or countryside from an automobile, and the ability to get around by bicycle or on foot in a safe and pleasant atmosphere. These are the varied qualities that people treasure and do not wish to lose as their community grows; or they may be qualities people feel their community lacks that growth can bring if properly guided.

The term "greenspace" makes many of us think of wide open spaces with grass and trees. Indeed, it first was used to refer to places where nature reigns within the city, either as remnants from the predevelopment landscape, or re-creations of it through plantings. The initial idea of greenspace was to bring the benefits of the natural environment – moderation of heat and cold, influence on wind currents, the presence of wildlife, aesthetic enjoyment – to the "granite garden" that is a city.

Yet greenspace is not all green. It can be a street that is pleasant to drive, bicycle, and walk along. It can be a plaza in Downtown that is an enjoyable place to have lunch. These are "hardscape" greenspace elements – open spaces floored by concrete and asphalt that are attractive and valued because of good design, landscaping, and perhaps the presence of special features such as fountains or monuments.

Greenspace also is not only open space. Cultural resources – historic buildings and districts, farmsteads, and features such as rock fences – are among the greenspace elements that are important to this region's identity.



The "greenspace system" refers to the rich fabric of these qualities woven together throughout the community, giving it a coherent identity. One park isolated by buildings and paving, or a remnant of a stream running through a few backyards, or a lone remaining historic landmark surrounded by a modern suburb cannot satisfy the desire people feel for a community that is tied to the land and to its own past. ***A greenspace system brings together these separate elements so that each supports the other, creating a complete environment that has an impact on all aspects of our daily lives.***

For example, if the park is linked to a wooded stream that meanders through the neighborhood, there can be nature trails so that children can walk or bike to the park from their homes without being on the street. There will be more birds and wildlife, because the stream extends the habitat qualities of the park throughout the neighborhood. Similarly if the historic building remains in the setting that reflects its origins, the traditional agricultural countryside, it has greater meaning. The completeness of the landscape reassures us that the basic underpinnings of rural life and traditions remain unchanged.

The historic development of city and countryside alike has been a marriage of nature and culture – the natural resources of the land and the physical and social structures that people built from these resources over the years. Yet many cities affected by growth have become divorced from their natural and cultural heritage. These placeless, faceless communities could be Anywhere, U.S.A. ***A greenspace system reunites a community with nature, culture, and the identity its people created from them.***

**What Does Greenspace Mean to Lexington-Fayette County Citizens?** For many years the people of this community have expressed concern over the slow erosion of the Bluegrass identity and the loss of greenspace. These worries have been discussed endlessly in public meetings, development hearings, and the media. Surveys of county and city residents have demonstrated that this is a priority issue.

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Save greenspace was one of the ten most frequently repeated suggestions for improving the Lexington-Fayette County quality of life.

– *Speak Out Lexington, Roberts & Kay, Inc., 1992*

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The Lexington-Fayette Greenspace Commission was created to define what "Bluegrass identity" and "greenspace" mean to this community and to develop a plan for protecting them. The diversity of interests represented on the Greenspace Commission has led to a broad understanding of what "greenspace" includes. The Greenspace Plan is not only concerned with horse farms, parks, and rock fences, although certainly these are valued features of Lexington-Fayette County. The scope of the Greenspace Plan encompasses all types of landscapes and resources, within both the urban and rural area, that are a part of the Bluegrass identity. The Plan is as concerned with environmental quality, transportation, tourism, the economy, and education as it is with recreation.



Figure 2, "Greenspace System Elements and Functions," summarizes the topics mentioned in the Goals and Objectives (given in full in Chapter III) and provides, at a glance, a clear view of what the greenspace system and this Plan will include.

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**FIGURE 2**  
**Greenspace System Elements and Functions**  
**from Greenspace Goals and Objectives**

- ◆ *Preserve Bluegrass Identity*
- ◆ *Provide Regional Planning Framework*

**Planning and Growth Management**

- Urban Development Patterns
- Ecologically Sustainable Development
- Infrastructure Planning
- Scenic Corridor Planning

**Bluegrass Identity & Greenspace Elements**

- Natural Resources
- Historic/Cultural Resources
- Water Resources
- Open Space
- Scenic Resources
- Geologic Hazard Areas
- Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Native Vegetation

**Agricultural Preservation**

- Prime Land and Soils
- Economic Viability
- Rural Land Uses

**Recreational Opportunities**

- Pedestrian & Bicycling Corridors
- Streams - Roadways - Railroads
- Parks where People Live & Work
- Functional Classification and Management Plans
- System Linking Parks, Schools, Neighborhoods

**Educational Value**

- Environmental Education Sites
- Cultural Heritage Education
- Economic Value of Bluegrass Identity

**Regional Coordination & Promotion**

- Regional Committee, Inventory, & Greenspace Plan
  - Corridors beyond Fayette - Maintain Bluegrass Identity
-

## DEFINING BLUEGRASS IDENTITY WITH RURAL AND URBAN LANDSCAPE TYPES

To make a plan for preserving the Bluegrass identity, the Greenspace Commission first needed to define what creates it. **What combination of qualities of the environment and cultural development do people recognize and value as "the Bluegrass?"** This was a very important step towards evaluating individual resources for protection on the basis of their contribution to the Bluegrass identity.

The Commission realized that it was especially important to avoid personal preferences and recognize the full diversity of landscapes and resources valued by Bluegrass residents. One way this was done was by evaluating greenspace resources according to the characteristic types of rural and urban landscapes that the resources help to define.

The interaction of natural resources and cultural activities in Fayette County over the last two hundred years has created many distinct and characteristic types of landscapes. For the Greenspace Plan, each landscape type is significant and contributes to the Bluegrass identity. Through a process that involved much discussion at several different meetings, the Plan Subcommittee and the Greenspace Commission identified four different rural landscape types and three urban landscape types in Fayette County:

- ▶ **Rural Landscape Types** – The Kentucky River and Tributary Creek Valleys, General Agricultural, Horse Farm, and Rural Settlements.
- ▶ **Urban Landscape Types** – Pre-World War II Neighborhoods, Post-World War II Neighborhoods, and Central Business District / Other Commercial Areas.

The Plan Subcommittee and the Commission used questionnaires as an aid in reaching a consensus among the members on the extent to which natural and cultural features such as palisades, springs, historic buildings, rock fences, and tree-lined roads, for example, are characteristic of each landscape type. The generalized locations of the landscape types is shown in Figure 3.

The concept of the landscape types has been applied throughout the Greenspace planning process as a way to describe and incorporate specific elements of the Bluegrass identity in the Plan recommendations. For instance, landscape types were used to identify locations of significant rural resources and the areas that are the "best" representations of the rural Bluegrass identity (Section 1, Chapter IV). The cultural and natural features that are characteristic to each landscape type can also be used in design guidelines for future development and redevelopment, such as within Rural Settlements, to preserve and enhance Bluegrass identity. The landscape types also provided the basis for checklists that can be used to determine priorities among properties for inclusion in the Greenspace system, as described in Section 1, Chapter V.

## RURAL LANDSCAPE TYPES

Steep slopes, palisades, native tree stands, springs, water falls, floodplains, rock fences, rapids, and mills characterize the landscape of the southeastern part of Fayette County that borders Clark and Madison Counties. This landscape type was identified as the **Kentucky River and Tributary Creek Valleys** and includes the Kentucky River palisades and watersheds of Boone Creek, Elk Lick Creek, and Ravens Run.

Gently rolling terrain, fence rows, prime soils, ponds, springs, tree-lined roads, creeks, scattered single mature trees, barns / agricultural complexes, and rock fences are elements important to the **General Agricultural Landscape**. General Agricultural Landscapes are not limited to one specific geographical area of the county, but are found throughout the Rural Service Area and in undeveloped sections of the Urban Service Area. The largest block of General Agricultural Landscape is found on the east side of the county west of Interstate 75 and east of the Urban Service Area Boundary.

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Ninety five percent of Bluegrass residents believe **general agriculture is important to the regional economy**. Sixty nine percent of Fayette Countians believe **horse farms are crucial to preserving open space**.

– *Bluegrass Tomorrow Survey, MC2, 1991*

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For the **Horse Farm Landscape**, the following elements are significant: prime soils, gently rolling terrain, tree-lined roads, fence rows, agricultural complexes, horse cemeteries, rock fences, and entrances / gate houses. As is the case with the General Agricultural Landscape, sections of Horse Farm Landscape are found throughout the Rural Service Area and in undeveloped sections of the Urban Service Area. A significant block of this landscape type is found along North Elkhorn Creek in an arc from the northwest side of the county to the northeast side.

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A regional survey using photographs identified the **agricultural landscape features that Bluegrass residents value the most and dislike the most**. The most valued rural features were narrow, tree-lined roads (first), rock and plank fences, horse farms, fields and fence rows, woodland savannah, and historic buildings. The features disliked the most were piano-key residential development, deteriorated spot commercial uses, and roads with no trees or fencing.

– *Views from the Road, Trust for Public Land / Kentucky Heritage Council, 1993*

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The ***Rural Settlements Landscape*** includes all late eighteenth and nineteenth century settlements, typically related either to crossroads or streams, in both the Rural and Urban Service areas. Communities such as Athens, South Elkhorn, and Fort Spring are characterized by historic commercial buildings, tree-lined roads, stands of native trees, public open space associated with church and school yards, historic residential neighborhoods, and cemeteries.

#### URBAN LANDSCAPE TYPES

Landscape types were easier to identify in the Rural Service Area than within developed sections of the Urban Service Area. Elements contributing to the Bluegrass identity do exist in the urban area, but their visibility and access have not always been enhanced by recent development patterns and practices.

Urban neighborhoods in Lexington have distinctive characteristics relative to their construction pre- or post-World War II. ***Pre-World War II Neighborhoods*** are typically within a two-mile radius of the Fayette County Courthouse and are characterized by dense development, narrow street frontages, mature trees, and pedestrian scale. Native limestone is often used in foundations and entry pillars in these neighborhoods, which feature a variety of historical architectural styles ranging from Federal townhouses to bungalows. The late 18th century and 19th century neighborhoods display the grid street pattern of Downtown, while 20th century neighborhoods have a more curvilinear, naturalistic layout. Examples of Pre-World War II Neighborhoods include Ashland Park, Woodward Heights, Northside, and Cherokee Park.

***Post World War II Neighborhoods*** are typically more than two miles from the Courthouse and reflect the influence of the automobile. These neighborhoods are less densely developed due to the wider frontages needed to accommodate driveways and the ranch style houses typical of the era. Examples of Post-World War II Neighborhoods include Lansdowne and Gardenside.

Natural elements of the Bluegrass identity found in both Pre- and Post-World War II Neighborhoods include gently rolling terrain, streams, floodplains, sinkholes, and woodlands. Street tree plantings are reminiscent of the tree-lined roads significant to all of the landscape types. Areas with native tree stands have been preserved in places such as Johnson's Woods at the U.K. Arboretum, the entry to Hartland Subdivision on Armstrong Mill, and the Ashland Park neighborhood. These neighborhoods also contain sinkholes and remnants of natural streams and their floodplains, although most drainages in the Pre-World War II Neighborhoods have been channelized or piped underground. Within the open grassy areas associated with churches, schools, parks, country clubs, golf courses, and college campuses are tributaries of Cane Run, Town Branch, Wolf Run, South Elkhorn Creek, North Elkhorn Creek and West Hickman Creek.

Cultural elements also remain in these neighborhoods. Remnants of rock fences are found at entrances to Meadowthorpe, along Old Frankfort Pike and Newtown Pike, and along West Hickman Creek in Veterans Park. Some historic residential neighborhoods

reflect the scale and character of the rural settlements in the patterns and density of their development and their relationship to public open space. Examples include the neighborhoods near Gratz Park, Henry Clay Estate, Bell Court, and Woodland Park.

Within the ***Central Business District and Other Commercial Areas*** scattered throughout the urban area are plantings of street trees that recall the rural tree-lined roads that existed before urban development occurred. Within Thoroughbred, Triangle, and Phoenix parks are water, trees, and open areas both paved and vegetated, with large-scale dramatic sculptural elements (limestone boulders, a waterfall, a horse race in bronze) that recall the Bluegrass landscape and way of life. These urban parks, which have been constructed relatively recently, are beginning to define a more modern image and identity for Downtown Lexington. Town Branch, a stream significant in the history of the city, is piped underground from its headwaters in the original commons area of Lexington, now Vine Street, to the parking areas west of the Civic Center. Westward from the parking areas it flows aboveground, often within concrete and stone-lined channels, through an industrial area to its confluence with the South Elkhorn. Town Branch, an important natural and cultural element, is virtually invisible due to channelization, overgrown vegetation, and surrounding land uses.

## A PREVIEW OF THE GREENSPACE SYSTEM

It is not difficult to imagine how the rural area will look in the future if the Greenspace Plan is successful – it will look much as it does today even if some uses and activities have changed, such as a few more parks, new plaques and pull-offs for driving tours, or revitalized general stores. It may be harder to imagine how the Greenspace Plan will transform the urban area.

Lexington-Fayette County citizens can visualize what a completed urban greenspace system would be like by visiting existing places in their community that have greenspace qualities. Lexington already has many greenspace successes. A few examples are listed in Figure 4. For a preview of the greenspace system, examine and enjoy these places with a new attitude, imagining what the surrounding neighborhood and entire community would lose if these places were not preserved, or if they had not been developed with a design that was sensitive to the Bluegrass identity and quality of life.

Imagine the Lexington-Fayette County of the future, where these types of open spaces, natural places, and historic buildings are protected throughout the community in an interconnected system. Imagine what new neighborhoods would be like if we have done a better job of saving what is left of the Bluegrass and building around it. Such a community would be a very pleasant place to live. Yet the benefits of creating a comprehensive greenspace system go far beyond leisure and aesthetics, and are fundamental to the future economy, quality of life, and quality of the environment of this community and the Bluegrass region as a whole.



## FIGURE 4 EXAMPLES OF PRESERVED / CREATED URBAN GREENSPACES

**East Main / Richmond Road** – Residential boulevard with median, mature tree canopy, cohesiveness of setbacks, land use, and design through the residential sector, with gradual transition to Downtown uses.

**Ashland Park, Meadowthorpe, and Bell Court Neighborhoods** – More intimate street settings, spaces and shade created by the lofty canopy of mature street trees, ample and interconnected sidewalks, historic estates and gardens preserved within the subdivisions.

**Griffin Gate neighborhood, golf course, and Marriot Hotel** – Intensive development around open space / recreation feature. Preserves original estate house, rolling landform, pond, stream, and mature trees in woodland savannah setting. Building setback from road complements open space of Coldstream Farm on opposite side. This symmetry of open space on both sides of the road is a significant resource.

**Tates Creek** inside New Circle Road – Grand boulevard landscape with wide setbacks, ample street trees, and buffer tree stands separating residential neighborhoods from heavy traffic.

**Ashland Oil / Long John Silvers / Humana office complex** – Open space used by neighborhood residents as passive park, also a transition helping office buildings fit in with residential area; preservation of wooded areas and enhancement of stream with pond, fountain, landscaping, and a wetland.

**Gardens, arboretums, and woodlands** – Lexington Cemetery's lush, storybook setting; the grandeur of Ashland; Johnson Woods at U.K.; the Mansfield estate on Richmond Road and Alexander estate on Mason-Headley – remnant areas of naturalized, diverse woodland habitat within a suburban landscape.

**Bikeways and walkways** – Section of old Squires Road closed and used as a bike path; the Bellefonte - Belleau Woods bikeway corridor from U.K. to Veterans Park via the ribbon park behind Bates Creek Centre; bikeways winding through Bluegrass-Aspendale; pedestrian bridge at the old Mt. Tabor Road crossing the reservoir outfall and connecting residential neighborhoods; connections from the urban area to the popular Delong bicycle route in the rural area.

**Creeks in parks** – Valley Park, a tended landscape with stream as centerpiece, pedestrian bridge that links two neighborhoods through the park. Upstream the creek and Prestons Springs are preserved in greenway behind houses, more wild, more private, used by local residents informally. **West Hickman Creek** through Veterans Park, wide with cut banks, historic features, and pedestrian bridge.

**Water and woodland in subdivision design** – Large trees preserved throughout Hartland subdivision and along Armstrong Mill; pond and wooded area in Willow Oak; stream and wooded area in Squire Oaks; pond and sinkholes in Gardenside; large trees throughout Deepwood; walking trails to parks and schools in the Dixie neighborhood, from cul-de-sacs that dead-end at preserved streams and parks.

**McConnell Spring** – Water feature indicative of karst topography, with associated woodland, special botanical areas, and wildlife habitats.

**Libraries and parks** – The ornate beauty in historic style of the old Carnegie Public Library and in modern style of the new Lexington Public Library; historic parks that are the heart of residential areas, like Gratz Park, Douglas Park, and Woodland Park; modern parks that are revitalizing the image and activities of Downtown, like Phoenix Park, Triangle Park, and Thoroughbred Park.

**Limestone building materials** – In building facades and foundations, rock fences, bridge abutments, retaining walls, channelized streams, giving a distinctive Bluegrass character to public improvements; the entrance to Keeneland and to the University of Kentucky; U.K.'s stone wall at Limestone and Cooper; stone arch at entrance to Hampton Court; the fire station on Man O'War Boulevard.



## GREENSPACE BENEFITS

**Economic Benefits:** Many studies and the experience of communities with successful greenspace programs have shown that greenspace has a positive impact on economic growth. Lexington-Fayette County does not face a choice between greenspace and growth. Instead, if greenspace is sacrificed in order to grow, we will waste a precious opportunity to build an economy that is part of a healthy community overall. The Greenspace Plan and Economic Development sections of the Comprehensive Plan, taken together, form the basis for a balanced, sustainable economy and community. The Greenspace Plan recommendations will strengthen the economy in many ways:

- ▶ *Encouraging tourism:* The Bluegrass has a growing national and worldwide reputation as an area filled with unique natural and cultural attractions. Tourism, one of the fastest growing industries in Kentucky and the U.S., holds considerable promise for economic diversification, and greenspace is the veritable goose that can lay these golden eggs. If the qualities that the Bluegrass is known for are lost, this key economic opportunity will be lost forever as well. The Greenspace Plan will not only protect the Bluegrass identity, it will also encourage appropriate development of heritage tourism attractions and businesses.
- ▶ *Supporting business attraction and retention:* A community's quality of life is an increasingly important factor in attracting and retaining business. Greenspace is an essential contributor to the quality of life and prestigious Bluegrass image that have already attracted many industries to our region. The creation of a greenspace trails system will also promote employee fitness.
- ▶ *Catalyzing Downtown revitalization:* Greenspace improvements, such as at Phoenix, Thoroughbred and Triangle Parks, have already played a positive role in Downtown revitalization. The proposals of this Plan will contribute to a Downtown that is a more attractive place to live in, work in, and visit for shopping and entertainment.
- ▶ *Making development more cost-efficient:* The high public and private costs of installing roads, sewers, and storm drainage can be an impediment to new growth. The Greenspace Plan recommendations will lead to greater cost-efficiency of flood control improvements and, through support of Urban Service Area policies, of infrastructure extension to new development.

**Benefits to the Agricultural / Rural Economy:** Agriculture is not only worth protecting because it is a Bluegrass tradition. Maintaining a healthy agricultural base is also important to the diversity and stability of the overall county economy. The Greenspace Plan recommendations will help strengthen agriculture in many ways:

- ▶ *Maintaining the resource base:* Good land and good water are basic to successful agricultural operations. Greenspace programs will protect these crucial resources for present and future generations.

- ▶ *Encouraging the next generation of farmers:* High inheritance taxes and farmland prices are making it very difficult for older farmers to pass on their way of life to the next generation. The tax benefits of conservation easements and purchase of development rights, coupled with inheritance tax reform, can help farmland stay within the family. These tools also have the effect of removing the speculative development value from land while compensating the current property owner. Use of these techniques over a wide area can create a supply of farmland that is more affordable to new, especially young, farmers.

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Only half (48.5%) of the property owners who responded to the Rural Survey expect their property to be farmed in the future. One-fifth of them (19.7%) said that **development would bring higher land prices.**

- Fayette County Rural Survey, Roberts & Kay, Inc., 1993

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- ▶ *Reducing land use conflicts:* Farmers are well aware of the negative impacts that nearby non-rural uses can have on the ability of farms to use necessary management practices, operate efficiently, and ensure the security of property and livestock. Greenspace protections will reduce urban incursions and conflicts in farming areas.
- ▶ *Diversifying the rural economy:* Few farm families rely on agriculture alone for their income. The Greenspace Plan recommendations concerning tourism and recreation can encourage small businesses that are compatible with agricultural operations and the character of the rural area.

**Benefits to Environmental Quality:** Ecosystems consist of interconnected elements. The greenspace system, by creating an interconnected system of open space and water resources, will help repair and sustain a healthy environment in several ways:

- ▶ *Safeguarding water quality:* The greenspace system will protect and establish buffer strips along streams, which will perform critical functions in purifying stormwater runoff: trapping sediment, filtering toxins and excess nutrients, and stabilizing banks to reduce erosion. The Plan also recommends a program to eliminate direct discharges of pollutants.
- ▶ *Supporting biodiversity:* Biodiversity, the hallmark of an ecosystem with long-term stability, helps nature respond to change through genetic diversity and wildlife movement. The Greenspace Plan recommendations will protect threatened species and their habitats and will provide a variety of habitats for species diversity. The greenspace system will interconnect many different types of habitat – field, forest, woodland edge, cave, spring, pond, stream and river, both in the city and country – to meet the complete needs of wildlife.

- ▶ *Educating present and future stewards of the environment:* Greater access to and understanding of nature, especially through the schools as recommended by the Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA), will foster a greater sense of personal responsibility for the environment.

**Benefits to Community Planning and Quality of Life:** Accomplishing the recommendations of this Plan will also have a positive impact on other areas of community planning: *transportation*, by making the experience of traveling by auto more pleasant, and by creating a safe and enjoyable system for bicycle and pedestrian travel; *recreation*, by increasing the opportunities for passive recreation and access to nature and water resources in the urban and rural area; *land use*, by providing an effective buffer to reduce conflicts between incompatible uses; and *education*, by transforming greenspace natural and cultural sites into classrooms, as required by KERA.

Protecting our remaining greenspaces and creating the greenspace system is not a luxury. It is a necessity for maintaining the quality of life that Bluegrass residents have always enjoyed and will continue to desire for the future.



### III. GREENSPACE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

#### PURPOSE OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives for the greenspace system were drafted by the Greenspace Commission as the first step in the Plan. These Goals and Objectives have two purposes. First, state law requires the adoption of goals and objectives, as a part of a Comprehensive Plan, that will guide decisions about the physical, cultural and economic development of the community. The Greenspace Goals were submitted to the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee during the 1993 plan update process, and were included in the Comprehensive Plan draft that will be submitted to the Planning Commission.

Beyond their legal function, these Goals and Objectives summarize what greenspace means to the Lexington-Fayette County community. The Goals and Objectives describe the scope of the greenspace system, the elements it must encompass, and the functions it must perform if it is to accomplish the aim of preserving the Bluegrass identity. As the Greenspace Plan was being created, the Goals and Objectives were used as a way to guide decisions about what was important to include in it. They helped the Greenspace Commission steer a clear course through a complicated subject, towards a vision of what Lexington-Fayette County can become: a community that holds on to the best of its heritage as it builds its future.

#### GREENSPACE PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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##### *Greenspace Mission Statement & Primary Goal*

*Develop a greenspace system that preserves the identity of the Bluegrass and provides a framework for regional planning.*

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#### PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Goal	To develop and promote a greenspace system as a basic framework for resource protection, open space planning and urban growth management.
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Committee Task	✓ <i>Establish a coordinated strategy to address greenspace issues and growth management issues by adoption of the Greenspace Plan as part of the Urban County's Comprehensive Plan and use of the</i>
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*greenspace system in development of the next Comprehensive Plan Update.*

- Objectives**
- Utilize the greenspace system as a framework for directing urban development patterns, further articulating the Urban Service Area concept and implementing it through proper utility and infrastructure planning.
  - Encourage and, where appropriate, require sensitive use of the land, making conservation of natural resources and development mutually beneficial, and thereby achieving an ecologically sustainable relationship between humans and the environment.
  - Coordinate parkway and scenic corridor planning with transportation planning and implementation, protecting natural resources adjacent to existing streets and planning future roads to complement and enhance views of the Bluegrass.

### ***BLUEGRASS IDENTITY***

**Goal** To preserve, protect and enhance the Greenspace elements that give the Bluegrass Region its unique identity, including natural areas, scenic areas, scenic vistas, places of historic and cultural significance, environmentally sensitive areas, geologic hazard areas, and water resources.

**Committee  
Tasks**

- ✓ *Conduct a county-wide inventory of each of the above-named elements, and identify all elements with appropriate graphic techniques.*
- ✓ *Establish priorities for the protection, preservation, or enhancement of the most significant elements identified in the inventory.*

- Objectives**
- Encourage open space preservation and development through policies such as scenic easements, urban cluster housing, and well defined buffer areas or compatible transitional land uses at the urban-rural interface.
  - Seek to incorporate, where appropriate, native species planting strategies in order to preserve and enhance an understanding of our natural heritage and to minimize maintenance and replacements costs.

## AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION

- Goal** To protect, preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the agricultural uses within the Rural Service Area.
- Committee Tasks**
- ✓ *Identify and map rural land uses and prime land and soils; and develop criteria for prioritizing their preservation and protection.*
  - ✓ *Develop strategies to enhance the long-term economic viability of significant agricultural lands or farms, including policies that provide tax incentives and enhance the competitive capabilities of farms.*
- Objectives**
- Discourage rural residential development on prime agricultural lands, viewsheds, or historic or scenic corridors, using policies such as purchase of development rights, overlay zoning, and minimum rural lot acreage of 30 or more acres, as well as conservation or scenic easements and other innovative methods of land and resource preservation.

## RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

- Goal** To preserve, protect and enhance open space for passive and active recreational opportunities.
- Committee Task**
- ✓ *Develop management plans designating (in general, yet site specific terms) the appropriate uses of parks, parkways, greenways and other public greenspace properties.*
- Objectives**
- Provide recreational open space close to where citizens live and work, by developing neighborhood parks and making public school grounds an integral part of the greenspace system.
  - Strengthen and/or establish pedestrian linkages and provide for an unbroken future greenway system linking neighborhoods, parks, schools and other significant points of interest throughout the city and county.
  - Preserve, enhance and where appropriate reclaim streambeds and old roadway and abandoned railroad corridors for pedestrian, cycling and other uses as well as linking elements in a greenspace system.



### EDUCATIONAL VALUE

- Goal** To utilize and manage open space to provide significant educational and economic opportunities.
- Committee Task** ✓ Involve public and private school representatives in development of the greenspace system and encourage their use of it for educational as well as recreational purposes.
- Objectives**
- Develop a diverse system of publicly accessible open spaces to enhance environmental education opportunities.
  - Develop the public understanding that the character of the Bluegrass Region and specifically the maintenance of open space are fundamental to the region's economic growth and stability; they strengthen tourism, attract new businesses and enhance the satisfaction of those living and working in the Bluegrass Region.

### REGIONAL COORDINATION

- Goal** To encourage cooperation and communication throughout the region in order to promote greenspace, environmental protection and land conservation.
- Committee Task** ✓ *Enhance regional communication through the establishment of a regional greenspace steering committee and/or other appropriate techniques.*
- Objectives**
- Encourage and cooperate in the development of a regional greenspace inventory and regional growth management plan to accomplish greenspace goals at a regional level.
  - Coordinate land use, transportation and utilities decisions to maintain the essence of the Bluegrass Landscape in corridors extending beyond Fayette County boundaries.

## IV. GREENSPACE PHYSICAL PLAN

Lexington-Fayette County is the heart of Bluegrass country, and the people who live and work here are stewards of a landscape of world renown. The Greenspace Plan translates their concerns for protecting the unique identity of the Bluegrass into recommendations for public and private action.

We all know what is special about the Bluegrass, and what is at stake – the sharp distinction between city and countryside, blurred by suburban sprawl in other communities; our inheritance from the generations who built the Bluegrass, the historic homes, churches, and rock fences that have been pulled down to make way for faceless development in other communities; the land, trees and water that are the foundation of farming and the fabric of pleasant city life, buried under the urban advance in other communities.

Yet time cannot stand still. Lexington-Fayette County is experiencing a healthy growth rate with attendant social and economic transformation. The very qualities that draw new residents and new businesses to the Bluegrass are threatened by this success. The challenge that is met by the Greenspace Plan is to protect our remarkable natural and historic heritage within an urban / rural form that is adapted to the needs of the future.

The Greenspace Plan has two parts: the Physical Plan, with concepts, policies, and project proposals for greenspace protection, illustrated on maps and in words; and the Implementation Techniques / Action Plan, with the specific steps that must be taken to accomplish these proposals, and the agencies and organizations that should take them.

This chapter accompanies the Greenspace Physical Plan, which graphically displays the greenspace proposals for the Rural Service Area, Urban Service Area, and Downtown. This chapter first describes the concepts that are common to the greenspace system in all three areas, then discusses concepts, policies, proposals, and examples for each of these areas. The planning process that was followed to arrive at these recommendations is outlined in Section 2.

### GENERAL GREENSPACE CONCEPTS

**Greenspace System Components:** There are three basic components of the greenspace system, whether in the rural, urban or Downtown area:

- **Resources** – The natural and cultural characteristics of the Bluegrass identity that were listed and mapped in the greenspace inventory and that were evaluated to decide if they should be included and protected as a part of the greenspace system. These inventoried resources are summarized in Figure 5.
- **Sites** – The particular locations and properties with significant Bluegrass resources or open space potential that could be preserved and made accessible to the

public, through acquisition, easements or management agreements, as a part of the greenspace system.

- **Linkages** – The linear corridors such as streams, roads and railroad rights-of-way that can create an interconnected greenspace system throughout the urban and rural area. In the urban area, protected Bluegrass resources and greenspace sites would be linked with parks, schools, residential neighborhoods, and shopping and employment districts. In the rural area, linkages would allow greater public enjoyment of rural resources through driving tours, bicycling, and hiking.

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## FIGURE 5: INVENTORY OF GREENSPACE RESOURCES

### GREENSPACE RESOURCES:

#### HISTORIC FEATURES

Historic buildings, outbuildings  
Rock fences  
Historic districts

#### RURAL LAND USES

Subdivided, non-farm land  
Horse farms  
General agricultural farms  
Rural settlements

#### TOPOGRAPHY

Ridgelines and high elevations  
(Topographic lines enclosing areas of high elevation were mapped, with the assumption that these areas are prominent in the landscape.)  
Steep slopes (over 15%)

#### ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE & GEOLOGIC HAZARD AREAS

Sinkholes – (single)  
Sinkhole clusters, caves and springs (The Greenspace Inventory Maps do not distinguish between these.)

#### SOILS

Primary soils  
Secondary soils (of statewide importance)

#### VEGETATION

Major tree stands  
Significant botanical areas (as designated in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan and by the Kentucky Nature Conservancy)

### WATER RESOURCES

U.S.G.S. blueline streams  
Kentucky River  
Urban drainages  
Ponds, lakes, and reservoirs (Farm ponds were not identified in the resource mapping.)  
Floodplain soils (100-year floodplain)  
Greenways (as designated on the 1988 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map)

### GREENSPACE OPPORTUNITIES:

#### PUBLIC / SEMI PUBLIC LANDS

Parks  
Golf courses  
Schools – public and private  
Universities and colleges  
Libraries  
Streets and highways  
Street medians  
Army Depot  
Airport

#### UTILITIES

Sewer and water treatment plants  
Railroads & abandoned railroad rights-of-way

#### PRIVATE LANDS

Churches (Inventoried in Downtown area only. Historic churches are shown as historic buildings throughout the County.)  
Golf courses  
Country clubs  
Hospitals  
Cemeteries  
Wildlife / fishing and hunting clubs



**Levels of Greenspace Protection:** The resources that combine to create the synthesis we appreciate as the Bluegrass identity are interwoven throughout the urban and rural area. To protect the Bluegrass identity, the greenspace system must also have a widespread presence. This may raise a question in people's minds about the scope of public ownership, access and regulation compared to continued private ownership and stewardship responsibility for greenspace. To answer this question, the Greenspace Plan contemplates **three levels of increased protection** for greenspace lands, which are simplified in Figure 6:

- **Level 1: Resource protection** would protect significant resources on private property, where no public access or public ownership is contemplated. This would be appropriate for protection of large areas of farmland, environmentally sensitive resources, historic resources, etc. Resource protection would be accomplished by a combination of voluntary and incentive-based measures and new or modified regulatory techniques. Techniques such as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, new zoning and development review regulations, and overlay zoning should be evaluated and implemented if appropriate to preserve Level 1 resources.
- **Level 2: Visual access and protection** would preserve and enhance resources along designated road corridors and areas that are visible to the public. This is a way to increase public enjoyment of the rural and urban area and protection of the most visible aspects of the Bluegrass identity without changing land ownership. Visual protection could be accomplished by a similar combination of incentive and regulatory measures as for Level 1 resources, applied along road corridors. In the rural area, only limited locations would have physical public access for pull-offs, markers and displays, and support facilities. In the urban area, many strategies for enhancing road corridors would be pursued.

It should be noted that there has not yet been a comprehensive visual or scenic assessment of Fayette County, and thus scenic resources could not be inventoried as background information for this Plan. Throughout the Plan, references to visual access simply mean that other inventoried resources, such as tree stands or rock fences, are located adjacent to or close to public roads.

- **Level 3: Public parks and trails** would allow increased public access to greenspace. Property would be acquired and owned by the public, or easements would be donated by or acquired from property owners that would allow limited public access, for trails and bike paths.

## **RURAL AREA GREENSPACE PLAN**

It is crucial to preserve the rural Bluegrass landscape on a large scale. One reason behind the public interest in a greenspace plan was the realization that we can no longer take for granted that the rural landscape will continue unchanged in the face of modern social and economic pressures. To maintain a healthy agricultural economy, we must preserve the working agricultural landscape intact. A successful farm relies upon the soil, the water, the past investment in buildings, and the structure of the entire community. It is the same with the character of the rural Bluegrass identity. It does not reside in isolated features; it is not simply a rock fence here or a historic plaque there. The Bluegrass is an ensemble of land, water, buildings, and people, and to keep it we must preserve the fabric of the whole.

The Physical Greenspace Plan for the rural service area is based upon knowledge of the synthesis of resources that defines the Bluegrass identity. This Plan recommends incentives for private land stewardship and models for public action that, together, will protect the essence of the rural Bluegrass.

## **RURAL GREENSPACE RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

The rural Greenspace Plan identifies **natural and cultural resources** that are proposed for preservation, restoration, and enhancement. The **types of rural resources** that are proposed for greenspace protection include:

**Natural resources:** These are natural resources and landforms that are significant to the rural Bluegrass identity and way of life and environmentally sensitive resources that are indigenous or distinctive to the Bluegrass.

- ▶ **Examples** include the Kentucky River, its tributary streams, and their palisades, waterfalls, dams; primary farmland, farmland of secondary importance, and the horse farms and general agricultural farms built upon them; the sinkholes, caves, and springs typical of limestone karst topography; and the tree stands and forests related to rivers and floodplains, tree-lined roads, and savannah woodlands.

**Cultural resources:** These resources convey the rural Bluegrass identity that has been created over time by human management and alteration of the natural landscape and by the construction of buildings needed for farming and community life from the materials at hand. Rural cultural resources are a visible reminder of Bluegrass agricultural traditions and the interaction of environmental, economic, and social influences.

- ▶ **Examples** include historic buildings and districts; both traditional and new farmsteads; field patterns; landmarks such as churches and schools; historic rural settlements; and rock fences.

Figure 5, above, includes the complete list of the resources that were inventoried for the



rural area. The process for evaluating these resources to determine which areas deserve and need greenspace protection is in Section 2, Chapter III.

### ***Designated Areas for Rural Resource Conservation Policies***

The Lexington-Fayette County rural countryside is rich with the qualities of the environment and cultural development that make the Bluegrass so special. The Greenspace Physical Plan divides the entire Rural Service Area into three types of areas, as a general guide to help match appropriate preservation policies and techniques to the significance of the Bluegrass rural resources in these areas. These resource conservation designations cut across all rural landscape types – horse farm, general agricultural farm, rural settlements, and the Kentucky River valley and tributary streams – to ensure that the diversity of values and preferences about Bluegrass landscapes are all represented.

- **Significant Rural Resource Concentrations** identify specific locations within the landscape with resources that should be considered for increased protection. These are areas where resources highly significant to the Bluegrass identity are located together.
  - ▶ Significant Rural Resource Concentrations were identified by two different methods. The first method identified where three or more inventoried resources were located in close proximity, regardless of the category of the resource. The second method gave weighted values to the resources considered to be the defining features of the various landscape types. By combining the two methods, equal consideration was given to both natural and cultural resources and to all rural landscape types. (See also Section 2, Chapter III.)
  - ▶ Significant Rural Resource Concentrations are found scattered throughout the rural area. The density of resource concentrations helped determine whether existing protections under the Comprehensive Plan and current zoning were sufficient, or whether greater protection is needed.
  - ▶ **Implementation:** Large areas containing a high density of Significant Rural Resource Concentrations are recommended for special protection within Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas, as described below. In addition, all Significant Rural Resource Concentrations located within Current Rural Protection Areas should be considered for protective measures during development, as described below.
- **Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas:** These areas need a greater level of protection than is afforded by current land use regulations and a strong, proactive approach towards land preservation. These are the rural areas that have the greatest sensitivity to any development intrusion or change, such as currently-permitted minimum agricultural subdivision or destruction of the significant resources that are valued as part of each landscape type.

- ▶ These are *unified, consistent landscapes containing a greater density of Significant Rural Resource Concentrations*. All landscape types are represented. These areas have a synthesis of the several significant elements that combine to create the best examples of that landscape type and that aspect of Bluegrass identity.
- ▶ The *boundaries* of these areas are ridgelines where available as the best approximation of enclosure and definable edges. Where ridgelines were not located close enough to the concentration of resources to be a useful boundary, areas were bounded by non-rural land uses, roads, and the edge of the significant resource concentrations. Boundaries need to be refined in the field through further study as the Greenspace Plan is implemented.
- ▶ **Implementation:** Both Significant Rural Resource Concentrations and Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas would be the target areas for Implementation Level 1 (private ownership, no public access) and Level 2 (visual access) protection actions. These could be target areas for a major outreach effort to property owners to encourage conservation easements and purchase of development rights. Special use and design standards through techniques such as greenspace overlay zoning are also needed.
- ▶ **Example:** The horse farm country on the west side of Fayette County, extending from Yarnallton on the north to the Woodford and Jessamine County lines, is a unified landscape with a wealth of natural and cultural features that define Bluegrass identity. Although there are some major pre-existing areas of non-rural development, such as the airport and the Westmoreland subdivision, any new development would be very intrusive and disruptive to the overall character of the area. Incentives for private protection of the land such as donation and/or purchase of development rights and conservation easements, combined with protective greenspace overlay standards applied to any new subdivision allowed by zoning, would be the best method for preserving this area.

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Regional residents (63%) believe "**conversion of farmland**" is **the most serious problem facing the Bluegrass**, and three-fourths believe there should be less or no more conversion.  
 – *Bluegrass Tomorrow Survey, MC2, 1991*

Three-fourths of the people who responded to the Fayette County Rural Survey (75.4%) believe that **farmland should be preserved for future generations**. Very few (13.1%) feel that current Fayette County farmland protections are adequate.  
 – *Fayette County Rural Survey, Roberts & Kay, Inc., 1993*

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- **Current Rural Protection Areas:** These areas have significant rural resources, but at a lesser density. As a baseline, the current level of comprehensive plan policies and zoning measures protecting these rural areas is sufficient and should be maintained, with the following exception:
  - ▶ There may be *Significant Rural Resource Concentrations* within the Current Rural Protection Areas indicating smaller areas that are worthy of enhanced protection.
  - ▶ **Implementation:** Special subdivision and zoning standards could be adopted that would require protection of identified resources.
  - ▶ **Example:** A request to subdivide 10 acre lots is reviewed against defined lists of resources to identify the on-site resources that are recommended for preservation by the Greenspace Plan. Standards and procedures contained within existing and new ordinances are followed to protect these resources through the subdivision process. For instance, requirements might preserve the rock fences and canopied tree-lined roads on the property's frontage and guide location of the development to minimize visual intrusion.

## **RECREATION AND TOURISM IN THE RURAL AREA: GREENSPACE LINKAGES AND SITES**

**The Need for Increased Rural Recreational Access:** In part this greenspace planning effort was propelled by the strong public desire for greater access to the rural area. For city and suburban dwellers, one of the greatest attractions of living in or visiting the Bluegrass is the experience of the surrounding rural countryside. Today, a city dweller or tourist wanting to enjoy a day in our special Bluegrass surroundings can visit the Kentucky Horse Park or Ravens Run Nature Sanctuary, or can take a drive or a potentially hazardous bicycle ride on back roads. These are limited options considering the wealth of rural resources surrounding us.

**Balancing Public and Private Needs:** Planning for public recreation and tourism within the rural area has balanced two needs that must be met with minimum conflict. The first is the need to preserve the security of agricultural operations and the privacy that is essential to the rural way of life. The second is the need to increase public recreational opportunities in the rural area, which in turn will increase public support for rural greenspace protection.

This plan envisions managed tourism and recreation in keeping with traditional rural public access opportunities, such as driving/bicycling tours and public parks. Increased public recreational access in the rural area would be accomplished through a different concept of greenspace sites and linkages than in the urban area. Rural greenspace linkages will rely mainly on the roadway system. Rural greenspace sites that are accessible to the public will be far more limited in number than in the urban area. These recreation proposals would be compatible with the rural qualities that the



Greenspace Plan is intended to protect.

### ***Visual Access, Tours, and Trails***

**Tours:** The traditional and most popular way for people to enjoy the rural area has been along public roads, which provide wonderful opportunities for driving and bicycling tours highlighting the special qualities of the Bluegrass. The Greenspace Physical Plan identifies road corridors passing through identified highly significant rural resource areas and bicycling routes that should be the focus for developing similar driving/bicycling tours with property owner involvement.

- Important features along the road can be identified through *signage and brochures* that have an educational focus on themes of Bluegrass rural history and cultural and natural identity.
- The tours should be enhanced with *pull-offs and support services*, such as staging areas (picnic / refreshment facilities, parking lots, and restrooms), groceries, bed and breakfasts, restaurants and other small commercial businesses that have a scale, design and location compatible with the rural area (also see discussion of staging areas, below).
- *Bicycling opportunities can be enhanced* by signage and educational efforts to alert drivers and improve safety, and by paving of existing shoulders or acquisition of additional right-of-way to widen roads for bike lanes, where this would not impact resources along the road.
  - ▶ **Implementation:** These corridors should be the focus of *further study to identify viewsheds and significant visual resources* and to develop visual protection plans, corridor overlay zoning, and conservation easement programs (Implementation Level 2, Visual Access).
  - ▶ **Example:** The Old Frankfort Pike Scenic Corridor is a model for a primarily private effort to enhance scenic tours.

**Trails:** Off-road hiking, bicycling, and horse trails should be created with community consent and voluntary owner participation, and should be designed to ensure the security of surrounding farming operations. Because there are few places where off-road trails are feasible, these trails should be pursued in any area of the county where opportunities exist. Trails should be coordinated with the location of access points for water recreation (canoeing, fishing, etc.), as discussed below under Focus Areas.

- ▶ **Example:** The abandoned CSX (C&O) railroad right-of-way extending from inside the Urban Service Area to the rural settlement of Pine Grove and beyond has potential for a rails-to-trails conversion. The old CSX right-of-way near Bryan Station Road could also have potential, with trail linkages to North Elkhorn Creek.

**Urban-to-Rural Connections:** The rural areas proposed for tours, trails, and parks should be linked where feasible to the urban area with bicycle routes and hiking, walking, jogging, and horse trails. These would be a continuation of the major urban greenspace linkage system, funneled through "safe crossing points" identified at the urban edge.

- ▶ **Example:** Some farm tunnels beneath I-75 are large enough to provide connections between the urban greenspace system and the bicycle / hiking tours in the rural area, once development occurs and the tunnels are no longer used for farm purposes. Examples include a farm tunnel along the upper reaches of the North Elkhorn Creek that can connect out to the North Elkhorn rural area, and a farm road tunnel near Cane Run at Cold Stream Farm that can connect to the Horse Park via the University of Kentucky's Spindletop Farm.

### ***Focus Areas***

The Physical Plan shows generalized areas that are the very best examples of the rural Bluegrass identity. These areas have the greatest concentration of valuable resources representing the various Bluegrass landscape types. These areas should be the focus of further examination and development of strategies to enhance their long-term protection. These investigations should consider opportunities for increased public recreation in the rural area. Public use and access could be accomplished by a combination of tours along roadways and acquisition of public properties in limited locations. Public access must be controlled and managed with sensitivity to agricultural operations.

The significant rural resource areas identified as needing additional study and their general boundaries are:

- ▶ **North Elkhorn Creek** vicinity, from I-64 to the Scott County line, encompassing Russell Cave, Paris Pike, Briar Hill Park and Bryan Station Spring
- ▶ **Boone Creek** area, from Sulphur Well Road to Clays Ferry
- ▶ **Kentucky River palisades** area, from Clays Ferry to Tates Creek Road
- ▶ **South Elkhorn** Creek vicinity, from the South Elkhorn community and the Urban Service Boundary to Versailles Road
- ▶ **The Old Frankfort Pike** area.

These areas were selected by outlining the rural resource concentrations of the highest value that are located within the geographic areas and landscape types that were identified as lacking in sufficient public recreational access (see Section 2, Chapter III). For instance, although Masterson Station Park is in a strategic location, it does not contain much in the way of significant rural resources. Raven's Run Nature Sanctuary is heavily used, but it contains only a small area of river palisades and no recreational access to the river.

**Ways to Manage Public Access:** Although large areas are identified in the plan as Focus



Areas, there is no intention that there should be public access throughout these areas. *There would be limited locations for public recreational use in these areas.* Large areas are outlined to give many opportunities for the public and private sector to work together and identify the best locations and methods for public recreation:

- Increasing public recreational access should be approached with great flexibility, to take advantage of available opportunities. New public parks could be *large-scale parks* serving similar needs as Ravens Run, or a *series of small-scale parks* that serve both as staging areas or picnic stops for tours, access points for water recreation (canoeing, fishing, etc.), and passive parks for rural residents from the surrounding area. (See also the staging area policies below.)
- Public accessibility could be accomplished in many ways for those key greenspace resources and limited areas that need the highest level of protection and should be available for public enjoyment. Sites could be *acquired and managed by public agencies, non-profit groups, or private organizations.*
- These Focus Areas are also priority target areas for developing *tours and trails originating from and linking public access sites.*
  - ▶ **Implementation:** These would be *target areas for Implementation Level 3 measures (public access and use)* and for supporting Level 1 and 2 protections. These areas should be used as part of the *criteria for seeking to acquire land and for accepting donations of land to the public.*
  - ▶ **Example:** Additional lands could be acquired along the Kentucky River palisades, to expand Raven's Run or create another nearby park site. Elk Lick Sanctuary perhaps could become accessible through controlled tours, to protect sensitive resources there, if this is considered appropriate by the Elk Lick Sanctuary Board. With assistance from the Kentucky River Authority and other organizations, conservation and access easements could be acquired to develop a hiking / biking / horse trail extending along the river terraces. Additional boat ramps and public access facilities could be installed at locations where these activities can be safely accommodated. Driving tour brochures could highlight Fayette County and regional private recreational and support facilities along the river and attractions such as the palisades, Valley View Ferry, Star of Lexington and Dixie Belle river cruises, Clays Ferry Bridge, and High Bridge.

### ***Staging and Support Areas for Tours and Recreational Access***

Increased public activity in the rural area will also bring the need for support services and facilities: small parking lots for park-and-bike or hiking tours, restrooms, places to buy groceries and gas or to rent canoes, restaurants, and overnight accommodations. These needs must be accommodated in a way that does not endanger the very integrity of the rural landscape that draws people to the Bluegrass.



**Traditional rural settlements** such as Athens and smaller communities such as Fort Spring can become an integral part of the network of new public parks and tours throughout the rural area. The Physical Plan identifies those rural communities that are within or near the Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas and the Focus Areas. Opportunities brought by tourism and recreation can become a tool for preserving these historic rural settlements, which are so distinctive to the Bluegrass.

- *Rural settlements have great potential as staging and support areas for public recreation and tours.* These communities have traditionally been the commercial activity centers for the surrounding countryside, but many are now primarily residential in character. Tours and public recreation could be the catalyst for renewing local small businesses, such as restaurants, and for reinvestment in general stores. Vacant and publicly-owned land, churches, and other community buildings within rural communities present opportunities for increasing public access without disturbing rural identity. Small-scale parking lots and support facilities that would be intrusive in undeveloped areas of the county would be more in keeping with the traditional character and scale of rural settlements.
- Should revitalization occur in rural settlements, it must be recognized that many are located within areas that have been identified as being sensitive to growth and change. The landscape types description for rural settlements, as well as for the landscape of the area that surrounds them, should serve as a guide for design standards that should be applied to any change in use.
  - ▶ **Implementation:** More detailed planning should be done for each Recreation / Tourism Focus Area. This planning should project the staging and support facilities that will be needed and locations where development can be accommodated without compromising rural character. The Greenspace Commission and LFUCG should work closely with area residents to identify these opportunities. Intensive surveys of historic and cultural features should be done as a prelude to planning, for those areas where this has not yet been accomplished. Design standards applied through an overlay district should govern any new facilities.
  - ▶ **Example 1:** When planning is done for tours of the Boone Creek area, it may be decided that the Athens community is the best location for commercial support services. Design guidelines would be applied so that buildings renovated for a restaurant, bed and breakfast, and convenience store/gas station are in keeping with the traditional character of the community. In addition, an existing church within the Boone Creek area may agree to provide an easement to allow a set number of cars to park in its lot as the staging area for a loop bicycling tour. An intensive survey of historic and cultural features would be undertaken to identify tour highlights, sites to be protected from any negative impacts due to tour facilities, and elements for design guidelines.

- ▶ **Example 2:** Brochures and signage could designate a loop bicycling tour of the Yarnallton area. A state-owned parcel at Yarnallton and I-64 could be developed as a park-and-bike facility, designed to fit in with the landscape in a way similar to the pull-offs in the Old Frankfort Pike corridor.

**Existing commercial zoning** in the rural area may also be an opportunity for creating staging areas. The same compatibility issues and need for design standards apply as for rural settlements. However, some dormant commercial zoning may be at inappropriate locations for new commercial development – locations that are within highly sensitive resource areas, or that cannot be buffered from surrounding rural uses. There should be an inventory of these locations and rezoning should be initiated to return them to general rural use.

**Policies for Protecting Rural Character:** The proposals above are not intended to encourage or allow inappropriate rural growth not otherwise contemplated by the Comprehensive Plan. In particular, great care must be taken in allowing new or expanded commercial uses. The following policies for planning relating to staging and support facilities are essential to protecting rural character:

- **Small Area Plans:** A study should be undertaken to identify the location of all commercial and non-commercial staging areas. Once the locations are identified, small area plans should be done to specify the uses, extent and location of development, and design guidelines appropriate to each. Property owners should be closely involved in these studies, which should then be adopted as an amendment to the Greenspace Plan.
- **Private Commercial Uses:** Recreational staging and support needs should be accommodated within public parks as a first choice. Where this is not possible, these uses may be accommodated within existing rural settlements and existing commercial zoning, but only in locations where there will be no negative impact on the rural area. There should be no new commercial zoning allowed in the rural service area.
- **Existing Commercial Zoning:** A study has been done showing the locations of all existing commercial zoning in the rural service area. These locations should be evaluated to identify areas where new or expanded commercial uses would not damage the character of the surrounding rural area. Only these locations should be considered as staging areas. Properties with existing commercial zoning and underutilized development potential that are not within an identified staging area should be downzoned.
- **Size of Staging Areas:** Staging and support areas should be dispersed throughout the focus area and should be kept small in scale by restricting the size of parking lots, etc. Once the demand outstrips the size of the facility, a new location should be added.



- **Design Guidelines:** It is crucial to adopt use restrictions and guidelines for architectural and site design to ensure that staging and support facilities are compatible with the character of the rural area, according to the landscape types, and with greenspace goals, objectives, and policies. These could be applied through overlay zoning or other methods. If this cannot be done, no new staging or support uses related to greenspace should be allowed in the rural area.

## **URBAN AREA GREENSPACE PLAN**

### **OVERVIEW OF THE URBAN GREENSPACE SYSTEM**

The General Greenspace Concepts at the beginning of this chapter list three basic components of the greenspace system: resources, sites, and linkages. These components have different meaning in the urban area than in the rural area, and the proposed Urban Greenspace Plan is quite different as well. As with the Rural Greenspace Plan, the Urban Plan is based on a foundation of the inventory of greenspace resources. The way that those resources are proposed to be protected, re-established, and made accessible within the greenspace system reflects urban conditions – the greater density of development and people, the relative scarcity of remaining resources, the greater pressures upon them, and the need to re-create the Bluegrass identity in developed areas where no resources remain. The components of the urban greenspace system are the following.

- **Urban greenspace sites** are specific properties that should be investigated for public greenspace acquisition, easements, or regulatory techniques to protect significant natural and cultural resources and to provide additional open space and recreation opportunities.
- **Urban greenspace linkages** will create an interconnected system of trails, bikeways, natural areas, and attractive streets throughout the city, for non-auto commuting and recreational travel and for visual and environmental enhancement of urban life.
- **Urban greenspace character** describes the quality of urban design overall. The concept of greenspace should influence and shape the entire urban landscape. The benefits of greenspace should not be confined within the boundaries of parks and trails, the specific locations drawn on the Greenspace Physical Plan. The vast majority of city lands, where people reside, work, shop and learn, should also be attractive and liveable places, boasting the special qualities of the Bluegrass at a finer scale. The Greenspace Plan should be interpreted broadly as encouraging measures to keep, enhance, and re-create the resources that define Bluegrass identity throughout the city.



- *Properties adjacent to the proposed greenspace bikeway/trail system, which can become park-and-bike staging areas or stopping places for a rest or picnic.*

It should be noted that, as additional inventory information is available about greenspace resources and opportunities, sites may be added to the list. Section 2, Chapter II lists types of public and private properties that should be inventoried so that their current or possible contribution to the greenspace system can be determined.

**Horse Farms within the USA Boundary:** Other resource properties that should be considered for greenspace protection are highly significant horse farms remaining within the urban service area. While it is recognized that all properties within the Urban Service Area have urban development rights, the potential of maintaining the special greenspace qualities of these significant horse farms should be pursued if owners are interested. Techniques such as purchase of development rights and conservation easements should be explored with the property owners to preserve these as working farms and open space, if economically feasible and fair in terms of development rights. When a property is converted to urban use, efforts should be made to design development in a way that maintains greenspace resources.

## URBAN GREENSPACE LINKAGES

A key part of the urban greenspace concept is to create a network of corridors, trails, and open spaces throughout the city, for several purposes:

- **Visual linkage:** To enhance Lexington's Bluegrass image and the visual experience of traveling on city streets.
- **Environmental linkage:** To interconnect natural areas, parks, and open spaces, which will support the healthy functioning of ecosystems and the benefits they bring to urban development.
- **Recreational / commuting linkage:** To make it more feasible and attractive to travel within the city without relying on a car, e.g. by bicycle and on foot.

### *Visual Linkage*

The greenspace planning process evaluated the recommendations of the Corridor Enhancement Study. (Specific recommendations of that study incorporated in this plan are in Appendix B.) The Greenspace Commission has recommended to the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Corridors Committee a list of roads to consider as a high priority for corridor enhancement to support the greenspace system. These roads, which include all arterials and interstates, are significant for many reasons. They are the high traffic roads that most tourists and residents use to travel into and through Lexington. The character of these roads forms the impression people receive of the city. These roads are the connections to surrounding communities in the region and to scenic

routes in the rural area. The radial roads are a part of the urban developmental pattern, history, and identity of Lexington.

**Corridors Planning for Existing Roads:** The Greenspace Plan recommends two types of corridor treatments for existing roads, enhancement and protection.

- **Protection:** Some roads have a beautiful quality, often due to a concentration of natural and cultural resources at the edge of the road, that makes driving along them a pleasure. The character of these roads is fragile and easily damaged by road improvements, and should be protected.
  - ▶ **Example:** It is recommended that the Corridors Committee, Division of Engineering and Division of Planning should evaluate the qualities of roads, such as East Main/Richmond Road in the vicinity of the Ashland Park neighborhood, that are pleasant for driving, walking, and bicycling, and that seem to exemplify the kind of image the community wishes to project. Design guidelines should be developed to guide any improvements to the road to ensure these essential qualities are retained. The design guidelines could also apply to planning for other roads to give them the same greenspace impact as East Main/Richmond Road. Design issues might include scale, medians, street tree canopy and protection of mature trees, utilities, driveways, pedestrian and bicycling facilities, architectural design guidelines, protection of features such as rock fences, etc. (The Corridor Enhancement Study also discusses design guidelines.)
- **Enhancement:** Many roads give a negative impression or one that has little to do with the Bluegrass. The visual quality of these roadways should be enhanced with corridor and parkway improvements.
  - ▶ **Example:** Versailles Road, which is the introduction to Lexington for people coming in from the airport. This is an example of a road with both a protection segment (outside New Circle Road) and an enhancement segment (inside New Circle Road). The Corridors Committee is encouraged to plan for an entire road corridor, instead of short sections, even though the treatment may change depending on the conditions.

**Corridors Planning for New Roads:** We must also create a greenspace design vision and guidelines for new roads and those that will be substantially altered by widening and realignment. This is one of the most important and difficult questions the community faces, one that must be answered for the rural as well as urban area. As we plan patterns of growth that will respect and maintain our natural and cultural legacy, how can we also plan patterns of roads to serve growth without devastating this legacy? If we grow first and let standard road solutions follow, we will lose the essential experience of the Bluegrass.

Lexington-Fayette County needs a pre-emptive vision, with regional agreement, of what



our transportation corridors should be like. This design vision should weigh greenspace goals – protection or enhancement of natural and cultural resources, accommodation of pedestrian and bicycle traffic – equally with safety and cost-efficiency of auto travel. We must find planning and design solutions that can accomplish all of these purposes.

The Greenspace Physical Plan designates proposed new roads, such as the Newtown extension and Viley Road extension, that should be planned with greenspace in mind. Using the design guidelines that result from evaluating the qualities of the Richmond Roads, we should strive to re-create those qualities along new roads throughout the urban area. A similar process of evaluating road qualities and applying guidelines for widening and new construction should be done for the rural area.

**Lead Agencies for Corridors Planning:** The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Corridors Committee, the Division of Planning, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) is the appropriate group to spearhead greenspace enhancement and protection of roads. The following steps are also suggested:

- **Corridor Planning:** Integrate greenspace system planning and corridor planning, as was done for South Broadway. It is recommended that the Corridors Committee consider the corridors listed by the Greenspace Commission as priorities for their attention for design / landscape planning. Pursue corridor overlay zoning as recommended in the Corridor Enhancement Study.
- **Visual Access to Open Space:** Increase views to open space from roads. There is much more greenspace in Lexington than is visible from roads. As neighborhoods have developed over the years, public parks were usually located to the rear of building lots, so that only the houses and smaller internal roads have views of open space. As planning is done for new road improvements and parks, opportunities should be identified to create views from roads to open space.
- **Interstate Corridor Protection:** Project a stronger image of the Bluegrass to interstate travelers. Thousands of people pass by every day on I-75 and I-64. The vast potential of the corridor along the interstate to communicate the Bluegrass identity and market Lexington-Fayette County to potential tourists, residents, and businesses should not be ignored. Currently there are no protections or design standards that prevent new development at the interstate interchanges from looking like everywhere else in the U.S., or to protect significant greenspace resources that are visible from the interstates. A corridor overlay protection zone should be established with such guidelines and protections. The Corridors Committee should also design and develop "entries" at the interchanges and landscaping and signage to highlight the Kentucky Horse Park and other visible Bluegrass landmarks.
- **Rural Connections:** Designate the urban-to-rural routes that people take, or should be encouraged to take, when driving to the finer network of scenic rural



routes. Develop design recommendations to enhance these roads within the urban area.

- **Parkways:** Design new streets adjacent to streams and wooded areas so that these natural features are retained to create a parkway effect, especially along arterials and collectors. The Viley extension and Man O'War could be examples.
- **Significant Private Properties:** Identify ways to encourage protection and enhancement of private properties that are important as visual elements along roadways.
- **Urban Scenic Corridors:** Undertake a study to identify urban scenic corridors and implement scenic protection measures.

### *Environmental Linkage*

Cities can benefit from remnants of natural environments in many ways. The most basic is the aesthetic enjoyment of trees, vegetation, wildlife, open space, and natural watercourses. Natural areas can be set aside to provide unchanged and untamed experiences of "wilderness" within the city, especially along stream corridors, where the dense tangle of riparian vegetation and steep bluffs create a space that seems miles away from any development. Natural environments are also part of community identity, connecting a city to its predevelopment roots. For Lexington, streams, sinkholes, ponds, springs, fence rows and savannah trees bring the country to the city.

Nature also provides some practical functions. The many values of retaining natural floodplains for cost-effective flood management are detailed in the Greenway Plan. Stretches of water and vegetation have been shown to buffer cold winter winds, helping to insulate buildings, parks and streets from temperature extremes, and to increase summer air movement, helping the city to "breathe," expel air pollutants, and reduce the heat island effect.

All of these functions begin to break down when natural environments are reduced to small fragments surrounded by a hostile urban environment. A diversity of wildlife cannot survive without habitats for food, water and cover and corridors for movement between them. Streams cannot cleanse themselves without naturalized banks and surrounding open lands to filter pollutants. Floodplains are overtaxed when urban encroachment upstream transfers flooding downstream.

The linkage system in the Greenspace Plan will create a network of natural environments throughout the city, to support the healthy functioning of ecosystems and the benefits they bring to urban development. The precursor of this concept was the Greenway Plan, which recommended retaining areas of natural beauty and identity within the city, primarily along streams, and using them for improved flood control, recreational parks, and an off-street pedestrian/bicycle trail system. Because environmental functions are so interrelated with recreational and trail uses in the Greenspace Plan, the specifics are

discussed under "Physical Linkage," below.

### ***Physical Linkage***

**The Importance of a Physical Linkage System:** Development of a *comprehensive on-street and off-street bikeway/pedestrian system* linking greenspace resources with homes, schools, parks, and jobs is an organizing concept for the Greenspace Plan. The *trails* function of the greenspace system deserves special emphasis. User surveys in urban areas typically identify walking and running as the recreational activities that city dwellers engage in most frequently. Yet neighborhood parks cannot serve this need very well. A greenspace system with accessible trails adds an important and much-needed component to the city's recreation system.

In the past, LFUCG *bikeway planning* has mainly dealt with on-street bikeways for adult commuters. Recreational biking and the need for safe off-street routes for youth are transportation concerns receiving increasing attention.

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During the 1992 Speak Out Lexington meetings, the need for **safe bicycling routes for children and adults** was a frequent suggestion, one made in almost every Council district.

– *Speak Out Lexington, Roberts and Kay, 1992*

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Although many people may not see the need for a comprehensive bicycle/pedestrian system today, in the city of the future there is likely to be less far less reliance on individual modes of transport that require fossil fuels. Without advance planning, it will be difficult to retrofit an auto-dominated transportation system to bicyclists and pedestrians. We must begin to secure opportunities now, and gradually build a system that will be on the cutting edge of urban design.

The Greenspace Plan trails / bikeways concept is built upon the Corridors Enhancement Study, which forwarded the idea that pedestrian and bicyclist movement is as significant to road corridor planning as auto movement, and that all land uses should be linked by bikeways and walkways. The Greenway Plan also proposed that greenways could accommodate off-street, attractive paths to interconnect parks, schools, shopping, and employment and residential areas.

The Greenspace Physical Plan encompasses all of these proposals, and combines them with the linkage of natural and cultural resources that exemplify the Bluegrass identity, to create a multi-purpose greenspace linkage system.

### **How the Greenspace Linkage System is Structured:**

- **What the System Would Link Together:** Like a street system, the greenspace system ties together major open spaces and all of the activities and destinations of



daily life – homes, parks, schools, libraries, commercial and entertainment areas, and employment centers. These **urban activity centers and attractions** are located on the Greenspace Physical Plan.

- ▶ *Major recreational / open space destinations*, such as Ashland, the University of Kentucky Arboretum, Lexington Cemetery, Veterans Park, etc. are identified or will be created within each major area of the city, linked by cross-town "collector" greenspace routes. These may be the turnaround or end point of a bicycling tour, or a stopping place for a picnic lunch.
- **Interconnected On-street and Off-street Trails:** The LFUCG Priority Bicycle Facilities Plan would create an exclusively on-street bikeway system. This is especially suited to adult commuters. An off-street system is also needed for youth and recreational cyclists, joggers, and pedestrians. The Greenspace Physical Plan identified many opportunities for off-street linkages. Where these are not available, especially within the older urban area, enhancement of streets for greenspace trails and bikeways is proposed. The on-street and off-street trails would be interconnected to create a citywide system.
  - ▶ *Off-street trail opportunities* include greenways, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, utility easements, remnants of farm roads and rural roads, parks, golf courses, and nonurban lands. The evaluation of these opportunities is in Section 2, Chapter III, and implementation is in Section 1, Chapter V.
  - ▶ *Cross-town travel* (concentric circles within New Circle Road), which is significant for the greenspace system, is not well-developed in the street pattern. However, streams and their drainage patterns provide opportunities for cross-town routes perpendicular to the "spokes" of the major street system.
  - ▶ *Design standards* must be devised to interconnect the on-street and off-street parts of the system safely and effectively.
- **"Collector" and "local" greenspace routes:** As with a road system, there are major collector greenspace routes that travel across town, between districts and neighborhoods. At a finer scale, there are local greenspace routes for linkages within neighborhoods.
  - ▶ *The collector routes* link major recreation, retail and entertainment attractions. They also connect with the adult bikeway commuting route to large employment centers and with the major greenspace routes out to the rural area. Some of these routes would be so attractive that they would become major recreational experiences themselves.
  - ▶ *Local routes* would be mapped and developed over time, to create finer scale greenspace linkages within districts and neighborhoods, to local



shopping areas, elementary schools, neighborhood parks, etc.

- ▶ **Example:** The proposed South Elkhorn/Hickman/North Elkhorn trail system runs generally parallel to Man O'War Boulevard, sweeping across the entire southernmost suburban area from the western to the eastern USA Boundary. It will be a mix of interconnected on-street and off-street trails, following natural streams, remnants of farm and rural roads, streets, and park trails. The system will connect such features as the rural settlement of South Elkhorn, Waveland State Park, the City reservoir, and Veterans and Jacobson Parks. Offshoots from the main trail will connect through housing areas to neighborhood parks and schools, Shillito Park, and commercial areas such as Fayette Mall and Tates Creek Centre. Major collector greenspace routes from inside New Circle Road, such as from U.K., will terminate on this trail system.

People from anywhere in the city could bike down to the southern trail, move along it for awhile, and then loop back home. There would be park-and-bike facilities spaced along the trail, so that people could drive to it. The southern trail would also be a route from the city to scenic rural areas, such as from Harrodsburg Road out to Parkers Mill and the South Elkhorn Creek area, or along the abandoned railroad route southeast under I-75.

- **Safe crossing points:** To create an interconnected greenspace system, especially for bicycle and pedestrian travel, locations were identified where barriers and edges to neighborhoods, such as limited access roads, elevated roads, railroads, and high traffic streets, can be safely bridged by the greenspace system.
  - ▶ The Greenspace Physical Plan shows *bridges, underpasses, farm tunnels, and drainage culverts* with sufficient width for pedestrian/bicycle paths. Few bridges and underpasses have sidewalks. The Physical Plan shows where improvements are needed to allow the trail system to safely cross these barriers. Such improvements should be incorporated in all road / bridge reconstruction design.
- **Switching Points:** The Plan identifies park and semi-public properties where several greenspace routes would meet and cross. Trail opportunities need to be secured at these locations.
  - ▶ **Example:** The University of Kentucky campus, and the Arboretum in particular, is a tremendous opportunity as the largest and most influential coherent area of greenspace in the heart of the city and as a potential central switching point for connecting routes.

## DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE CONCEPTS

The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government is currently studying revitalization, transportation, housing and design issues for the Downtown area. This section of the Greenspace Plan offers general concepts and proposals, graphically illustrated in the Downtown Greenspace Concept Plan, that can be considered and developed in more detail during the upcoming Downtown planning effort.

### The Greenspace Role of Downtown:

- The overall greenspace system should **link the community with Downtown** and will pass through Downtown.
- Greenspace should **spark Downtown revitalization**.
- Downtown should become the **urban center and focus** of the greenspace system.

As the geographic as well as historic center of the city, Downtown Lexington is highly significant to the greenspace system. Downtown is the site of Lexington's founding and initial development, and is central to the city's urban identity. Although Downtown is not precisely at the center of the urban area, the historic road pattern radiates from it, and the greenspace linkage system will converge on Downtown as well. Improvements to parks, plazas, and pedestrian ways have created the foundation for developing a coherent greenspace system within Downtown that will relate to the city's modern as well as historic image and functions.

## DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE RESOURCES

Downtown greenspace resources were catalogued and evaluated in the same way as those for the urban area overall, with the following important additions:

- ▶ *Historic churches* have important greenspace value to Downtown for several reasons. They contribute to Downtown's historic character. The yards and gardens of the churches are among the few remaining green landscapes in an intensively developed area. Because many of the churches are located at the edges of Downtown, their presence is important as a transition that protects the integrity of surrounding historic residential neighborhoods and districts. If a church were to relocate out of Downtown, other uses of the property for commercial or parking purposes could destabilize the distinct edge between Downtown and these neighborhoods.
- ▶ *Private greenspaces*: For informational purposes the Downtown Greenspace Concept Plan identifies the location of many privately-owned open spaces, such as gardens, plazas associated with office and commercial buildings, and open-air dining and seating areas for restaurants. Many of these are visible to the public or are used by the public.

The Downtown study should more fully inventory the greenspace opportunities provided



by private properties, government buildings, and churches, and recommend specific strategies for protecting and enhancing those values.

## DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE SITES

Opportunities for new major greenspace sites in Downtown were evaluated by considering the location and distribution of existing parks in relation to areas that have intensive urban activity and areas that have redevelopment potential.

**Major Downtown Greenspaces:** These contribute to the image, public use, revitalization potential, and design quality of Downtown. There are three existing major Downtown greenspaces. *Triangle Park* and *Phoenix Park* are used by people for many reasons. The water elements are attractions in themselves, one of the experiences to enjoy when visiting Downtown. Downtown employees, shoppers and Library patrons enjoy the parks for breaks and picnic lunches. Private plazas at the Lexington Financial Center, Bank One Building, and Kinkaid Towers also serve these purposes on a smaller scale. *Thoroughbred Park* is also a major greenspace, but with a different function as primarily a visual element at one of the "gateways" to Downtown.

Downtown has two major **urban activity / employment centers**, which have a mix of intensive commercial, office, governmental, entertainment, and residential activities. These are generally in the *Rupp Arena / hotels area* and in the *Government Center / Public Library area*. Both of these activity centers have a major greenspace, Triangle and Phoenix Parks.

There are many **underutilized areas** throughout Downtown that have potential for redevelopment. Downtown parks and open spaces can be a catalyst for revitalization, and underutilized areas adjacent to existing major greenspaces are **key redevelopment parcels**. The Downtown study should determine the uses for these parcels that would best take advantage of proximity to the parks and would be most beneficial to the future of Downtown. For instance, if there is a desire to encourage more residences in Downtown, visual and physical access to the parks could make them more marketable.

**Recommendations for Major Public Greenspaces:** Strategic locations of new or renovated major greenspaces would encourage infill revitalization along Main Street, encourage greater use of Downtown by making it more attractive and interesting to pedestrians, and develop a unified, positive image of Downtown.

- ▶ A new major public open space is needed between Thoroughbred and Phoenix Parks. The addition of this fourth park would establish a rhythm of even spacing of parks from Triangle to Thoroughbred. The general location shown for the park on the Concept Plan is within an underutilized area, characterized by surface parking. Revitalization of this area would help extend the intensive activities of Downtown towards Thoroughbred Park.
- ▶ The *Ben Snyder block redevelopment* creates a significant opportunity to create a

dramatic "center" to Downtown, both in terms of activities and image. An open space on the north side of E. Main Street would extend and complement Phoenix Park. This is the only opportunity to create a symmetrical open space effect on both sides of Main Street; even a relatively narrow landscaped plaza on the Main Street frontage could accomplish this. Plans for this block should consider ways for redevelopment to accomplish both greenspace and economic goals.

- ▶ *Cheapside Park and the greenspace around the Courthouse* should be improved to make it more attractive as a visual element and for public use. The park redesign should encourage pedestrian and bicycle linkage to and from Short Street, as a part of the greenspace linkage system to Transylvania University and the north side neighborhoods.
- ▶ The vacant property on the *southwest corner of the planned Newtown Pike extension and Main Street* is an opportunity to create a major landscaped open space that would be, like Thoroughbred Park, a "gateway" to Downtown.
- ▶ The parking lot property at the *southeast corner of the High Street and Martin Luther King Blvd. intersection*, south of the Transit Center, also should be investigated as a major greenspace opportunity related to the Transit Center, and as a transition and Downtown "edge" that would protect the integrity of the South Hill historic neighborhood.

**Recommendations for Private Downtown Greenspaces:** The private sector can also play a role in providing greenspace opportunities that enhance the attractiveness and liveability of Downtown. The Downtown study should recommend ways to encourage the provision of new privately-owned greenspaces, especially those with entertainment uses, and the protection and enhancement of existing ones. The Downtown study should also recommend strategies that will help churches remain vital parts of the community in their current Downtown locations.

## **DOWNTOWN GREENSPACE LINKAGES**

Downtown is the hub of the greenspace linkage system. It is both a central destination and also a switching point for cross-town routes. Linkage improvements within Downtown will increase pedestrian use and activity and will enhance the city's image for visitors.

However, the current Downtown streetscape does little to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists, except along several blocks of Main Street. The Concept Plan identifies many potential connections within the Downtown area and from Downtown to surrounding neighborhoods and the universities. While this Plan suggests where connections are needed, it will be the role of the Downtown study to determine how these linkages would be developed. The linkage proposals are:

- ▶ *Pedestrian use of Main Street* should be enhanced.



- ▶ There are many potential *connections north from Main* to Short Street, Gratz Park, Transylvania University and surrounding neighborhoods due to the diffuse, small-scale street pattern. Cheapside, Market, Jefferson, Third, Rose, and Mill Streets have potential for a focus of pedestrian improvements. The Downtown study should consider ways to combine streetscape design improvements, park improvements, and revitalization to increase use of Downtown by Transylvania students, faculty and staff and by residents of these neighborhoods. These linkages are also important as a portion of the cross-town and urban-to-rural route through Downtown to Coldstream, Spindletop Farm and the Kentucky Horse Park.
- ▶ The Plan Subcommittee considered ways to *slow auto traffic and encourage foot and bicycle traffic* on Cheapside, such as pavement changes and the allocation of more space to pedestrians. Such design strategies for Cheapside or other streets should be examined in the context of overall Downtown traffic circulation.
- ▶ The *connections between Vine and Main Streets* need to be strengthened. The Concept Plan identifies Mill and Quality Streets and Ayers Alley as opportunities for pleasant pedestrian / bicyclist connections separated from heavy traffic.
- ▶ *Vine Street* has unrealized potential as a *pedestrian corridor and linear park*, with wide setbacks, existing street trees, and attractions such as the Farmer's Market. A strong pedestrian linkage should be created from the Transit Center to the Civic Center, Main Street, and the University of Kentucky (U.K.).
- ▶ Linkages should be created *south from Vine Street to U.K. and surrounding neighborhoods*. Steep topography and heavy traffic on High Street and the Vine to High cross streets present challenges to safe and attractive pedestrian / bicyclist use. The Concept Plan identifies the best potential connections as Martin Luther King Blvd. and Mack Alley to Lawrence Street.
- ▶ The confusing Downtown street pattern, which funnels traffic onto a few main routes, fragments Downtown from the surrounding neighborhoods and creates barriers to non-auto access to Downtown. The possibilities for greater coexistence between autos, pedestrians and bicyclists should be a part of any Downtown study to *re-evaluate auto circulation patterns and street / intersection design*.
- ▶ There should be a concerted effort to increase street tree plantings throughout Downtown and on the connecting routes with surrounding areas. This will both enhance the image of Downtown and create more pleasant walkable streets. The Downtown study should include an inventory of properties with sufficient space for street trees and should develop a street tree landscape design concept.
- ▶ The walking tours that have been designated for the Downtown area should be incorporated in the planning and design of greenspace linkages, through interpretive signage, brochures, and pedestrian improvements.

## V. IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES: HOW TO CREATE THE GREENSPACE SYSTEM

This chapter describes many **strategies, policies, tools and techniques** that the public and private sector, working together, can use to create the system outlined in the Greenspace Physical Plan. "**Greenspace Tools and Techniques**" describes strategies recommended by the Greenspace Commission. This chapter also discusses **new organizational structures** for applying land and easement acquisition tools and **funding sources** to support land and easement acquisition. Because the urban greenspace system is a complex proposal, the implementation techniques for linkage are also cross-referenced and **summarized according to types of potential greenspace linkage properties**. Finally, this chapter proposes a **process for evaluating and prioritizing** the many recommended greenspace sites and linkages for implementation. This process can be used as often as needed to respond to capital budget planning and funding opportunities, as well as every five years in concert with Comprehensive Plan updates.

Chapter V proposes a wide array of potential implementation techniques for greenspace. Chapter VI discusses actions and responsibilities for evaluating these proposals further, selecting the ones that are feasible and will be most effective, and accomplishing them.

### PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP: THE ROLE OF ACQUISITION, INCENTIVES, AND REGULATION

The beginning of Chapter IV discusses the three levels of greenspace protection and how these relate to public or private ownership of land. This is a fundamental issue for creating the greenspace system. Although much of the attention in this chapter and in Chapter VI centers on public actions and acquisition, actually most of the greenspace system will always remain in private ownership.

Lexington-Fayette County residents and property owners have been the stewards of Bluegrass lands for centuries, and much of the continued protection of the Bluegrass identity will be in their hands. There are many proposed **implementation strategies that relate to private properties**. These fall into three categories:

- *Incentives for Private Property Owners:* For those sites that will remain in private hands, strategies are identified that can encourage their owners to preserve and maintain them for their greenspace values. Incentive-based measures are those such as conservation easements, purchase of development rights, and the tax benefits of the donation of land and easements. These are voluntary measures that provide benefits to property owners in exchange for their willingness to limit the development potential of their lands, or to develop in a manner that is sensitive to resource protection.
- *Assistance to Private Property Owners:* Assistance programs offer financial or technical assistance to individual citizens or organizations, to help them



accomplish their own greenspace-related goals. Examples include a historic estate that receives grants or loans for renovation and technical assistance to determine adaptive reuse potential or to market tours and other attractions. Another example is the ISTE A grant to the citizens group Lexington-Frankfort Scenic Corridor, Inc. that is funding their scenic protection project.

- *Regulation of Private Properties:* In many situations, amendments to the Land Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance will be needed to ensure the preservation of significant greenspace resources on private property at the time of development.

In general, **the role of public acquisition** of greenspace land will be limited to those situations where public access will be allowed or where public ownership is the only way to adequately protect greenspace values. There should be a very strategic and limited use of public funding for land purchases and maintenance:

- *Greenspace Acquisition:* The greenspace sites and linkages identified as having potential for public access will be further evaluated by the prioritization process recommended below in this chapter. At that time, decisions will be made as to which properties should be investigated for acquisition or other protection measures. This chapter also lists potential funding sources for greenspace acquisitions.
- *Park System Acquisition:* Greenspace sites should also be reviewed for potential acquisition as part of the LFUCG Park and Recreation system. Sites with a concentration of significant resources can be incorporated into proposed parks. Where a property with greenspace potential is located near an identified future neighborhood or multineighborhood park, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, this site should be strongly considered for park purchase.
- *Enhancement of Public Properties:* For significant resources on existing public properties, joint-use opportunities for greenspace, visual enhancement, and public recreation should be examined and strategies pursued to accomplish this.

One issue concerning acquisition that needs further examination is whether floodplains and stream corridors that will become part of the greenspace system should be acquired and maintained by the public, or whether strengthened regulations and continued private ownership would be preferable (see "Stream Corridors" under "Implementation Techniques Summarized by Property Types," below and Chapter VI).

## **IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR GREENSPACE ACQUISITION, DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT**

The Funding Subcommittee of the Greenspace Commission identified techniques, new organizational structures for implementing those techniques, and funding mechanisms that can be used to accomplish the Greenspace Plan. The following recommendation of

the Subcommittee was adopted by the Greenspace Commission. Under each of the categories, the Subcommittee also made recommendations as to which programs the Greenspace Commission should not include in the Plan. These are listed in Appendix E.

### ***Greenspace Tools and Techniques***

1. **Purchase of Land:** Land may be purchased in fee simple by the Urban County Government. The land can be held and maintained for conservation purposes or resold \ leased with covenants or other restrictions designed to meet greenspace needs, such as preservation of resources or allowing public access for a trail.
2. **Purchase of Development Rights (PDR):** Purchase of the right to develop land from owners of specific parcels of land, leaving the owner all other rights of ownership.

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Lexington-Fayette residents **strongly support a purchase of development rights program** for farmland threatened by development, and are **willing to support a tax increase to pay for it**. Eighty-two percent of residents support PDR for general agricultural land, and 71% would be willing to pay \$5 a year in taxes to fund the program.

– *Bluegrass Tomorrow Survey, MC2, 1991*

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3. **Conservation, Scenic, or Facade Easements:** A legal document that sets forth restrictions on the use of property, usually privately owned. These easements can be donated to the local government or a nonprofit conservation organization, in the case of conservation easements. This enables the property owner to acquire a tax benefit based on the difference between the value of the land or building before the easement and the value after the easement. Easements are either given in perpetuity or for a specific time, may be given based on the scenic, natural, or historic value of the land, or may be given on a particular building based on its historic and/or architectural significance. Easements may be purchased in a manner similar to purchasing any other interest in land.

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A conservation easement program would be very successful in Fayette County. One-fifth (20%) of the people who answered the Fayette County Rural Survey **would be interested in a conservation easement on their property**.

This is an extremely favorable response.

– *Fayette County Rural Survey, Roberts & Kay, Inc., 1993*

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4. **Historic Districts:** Rural and urban historic districts may be created through established procedures (Article 13–Zoning Ordinance) based on the historical and architectural merits of an area. When a local historic district (or if only one parcel of land, a local landmark) is established, all major exterior changes to buildings, demolition and new construction must be reviewed and approved by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Board of Architectural Review.
5. **Nature Preserves Designation:** A system established by the Commonwealth of Kentucky (KRS Section 416.415) to acquire and hold in trust natural areas and nature preserves. The recognition of these areas is based on established criteria outlined in the statutes. Acquisition of land or interest in land may be by gift, purchase or easement.
6. **Growth Management Planning:** Lexington-Fayette County has developed a growth management plan. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Comprehensive Plan is an important planning document. When revising this plan, special attention should be given to incentive programs that would encourage the containment of population growth within the urban service area, thereby relieving development pressure on the rural service area. Specific proposals are given under "Integration with the Comprehensive Plan," Chapter IV.
7. **Zoning and Development Review Process:** The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government has established procedures for reviewing zoning requests, development plans, and subdivision plats. The regulations that are applied through these procedures could be amended to include greenspace protection measures. To accomplish this, comprehensive ordinances must be adopted and resource protection plans must be in place that will work in concert to preserve greenspace features during the development review process. The matrix of criteria for scoring a property's greenspace resources and potential (described in Chapter V) could be used as a guide for the resources that need to be protected through a revised review process.
8. **Flexible Land Use Regulations:** Traditional zoning and subdivision regulations can be too inflexible to protect a community's character or its natural environment. In many cases, more flexible land use regulations offer greater protection. Lexington-Fayette County already has many such regulations in place, such as planned unit development, design guidelines for historic districts, urban clustering, and flexible setbacks. Other incentive-based alternatives such as performance standards, open space compact development, density and design bonuses have been used in some cities to implement greenspace and environmental protection programs. The full array of these techniques should be studied to determine which ones are feasible, responsive to local market conditions, and would best accomplish the Greenspace Plan proposals.
9. **Greenspace Zone:** A variety of chosen implementation techniques could be packaged and applied within new zoning categories. These could be an entirely

new Greenspace Zone district or Greenspace Overlay Zones. Overlay zoning, which is already in place in Lexington-Fayette County for Historic Districts, can protect certain identified resources found throughout an area. Overlay zoning does not affect the density or use regulations present under existing zoning. Rather, it is superimposed over a government's various zones, creating an additional set of requirements, such as design guidelines or altered setback requirements, to be met when the special resources protected by the overlay would be affected by a proposed change.

Rural and urban greenspace districts could be created by one or more Greenspace overlay zones, similar to that of the Historic District (Article 13-Zoning Ordinance). This may be appropriate for many types of greenspace lands, such as Rural Resource Concentrations and Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas (defined in Chapter IV), rural scenic corridors, greenways along urban stream corridors that have been incorporated in the proposed greenspace system, or significant urban greenspace road corridors.

Creation of new overlay zones would require evaluation of the concept to determine the regulations that would be most feasible and effective in accomplishing greenspace purposes and to examine the legal issues. Implementation would also require more definitive studies to identify the resources and properties to which the overlay zones would apply.

10. **Agricultural Districting:** Kentucky House Bill 744, "The Agricultural District and Conservation Act" became law in 1982. Kentucky's Agricultural District Program provides for the voluntary creation of agricultural districts by a single landowner or group of landowners of at least 250 contiguous acres of land that is in agricultural use. This program is administered at the local level by Kentucky's 121 Conservation Districts and at the state level by the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Once an agricultural district is certified, the land in a district cannot be annexed by a city or municipality. State agencies must mitigate the impacts of state projects in a district, and landowners who receive a summons of condemnation on land in a district can request that a public hearing be held by the local conservation district.

This law allows a minimum of 250 acres of farm land to become an agricultural district. The certification of the district ensures that the land in the district cannot be annexed by a city or municipality, and landowners who receive a summons of condemnation on land in the district can request that a public hearing be held by the local conservation district. To strengthen the provisions of the act relating to agricultural preservation for greenspace purposes, modifications of the act might include the following:

- a. In order to be included in a district, the farmer must enter into a written contract with the state to continue farming for a stated length of time and allow it to be for more than five (5) years.



- b. In order to be included in a district, a farmer must develop conservation plans and a water quality protection plan.
- c. In concert with the above restrictions, strengthen the incentives for inclusion in a district by offering income tax credits to farmers whose property taxes are deemed excessive in relation to the owner's household home income. An example of a similar program exists in Wisconsin, which allows a maximum possible credit of \$4,200 available to a farmer whose net household income is zero to \$5,000 and whose property taxes are \$6,000 or more (1980 figures). A farmer with income of \$20,000 would be eligible for a maximum credit of \$3,675 on his state income taxes. Farm families making more than \$40,000 would be ineligible.

11. **Right-to-Farm Law:** Generally this type of legislation protects a farmer from nuisance lawsuits and from local ordinances that might hinder normal farming practices. These laws are most beneficial to farmers trying to farm near or adjacent to suburban development. Kentucky's right-to-farm law is found in KRS 413.072 and declares that no farming operation shall become a nuisance by any changed conditions in or about the locality if the operation was in existence at least 1 year before the changed conditions. It also restricts a local government from enacting any ordinances declaring a farming operation to be a nuisance.

This law seeks to protect the operation of a farm from nuisance claims generated by the proximity of urban development. The present law could be revised to allow the farmer more flexibility and better protection of the farming operation. Possible revisions include:

- a. The removal of the one (1) year operation time period of a farm. This restriction does not help a new farm or an existing farm that changes its operation from one use to another, therefore making it difficult to adapt to changing market conditions.
- b. Adding to the present law a provision that would allow the farmer to deduct any legal fees resulting from court action.

12. **Agricultural Zoning:** This kind of zoning can be exclusive, prohibiting any use other than agriculture, or nonexclusive, where nonfarm buildings are allowed, as well as other uses. Lexington-Fayette County's agricultural zoning is the latter and allows a minimum lot size of 10 acres. More restrictive zoning of 30 acre minimums are being increasingly used to protect farmland in other counties. Likewise, exclusive agricultural zoning can be more protective.

With growth occurring in the Rural Service Area of Lexington-Fayette County, the use of agricultural zoning to redirect and manage residential development in the rural area should be investigated. Possible programs include increasing the minimum above 10 acres for residential lots in A-R Zones. In particular, this may

be appropriate for rural areas designated in the Greenspace Plan for an increased level of protection.

### ***Means to Implement the Tools and Techniques***

This section of the report describes new organizational structures for implementing greenspace techniques. There are also many existing government agencies that could aid in implementing these techniques. These agencies and the responsibilities proposed for them are listed in Chapter VI, "Shared Responsibilities for Creating the Greenspace System."

A major and essential recommendation of this Plan is to establish one or more non-profit organizations to proactively pursue creation of the greenspace system and to accept property interests and easements for greenspace. There are two options. Each could have an important role to play in creating the greenspace system.

#### **1. Non-Profit Organization Associated with the Urban County Government**

It is recommended that a separate entity (Advisory Board) be created and called the "Greenspace Stewardship Fund." An advisory board should be appointed to make recommendations and give directions to the Urban County Council on how the funds in the Greenspace Stewardship Fund should be spent. It is recommended that the Chairman of the Funding Subcommittee as well as the Executive Subcommittee of the Greenspace Commission be named members of this advisory board. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council and Mayor could recognize this advisory board as an independent organization with specific responsibility for direction of its fund and supervision of any property easements held by the LFUCG.

Through the Greenspace Stewardship Fund, the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government could hold title to donated easements as well as other property interests. The power to maintain and enforce these easements and other agreements could be specifically delegated to the advisory board. Their actions would, however, always be subject to the control of the Lexington Fayette Urban County Council and Mayor.

Given that the donated/purchased property interests have an inherent value, that value could and should be counted as a resource or asset in determining the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's bonding capacity. The bonding capacity should increase by the value of the property interests. (In the case of a donated interest which qualifies for the charitable deduction under the Internal Revenue Code, this value should be easily documented by required appraisals).

#### **2. Non-Profit Organization that is Independent from Government**

A second non-profit corporation could be created that would be independent of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government. The Bylaws of this non-profit corporation could specify that representatives from various organizations serve as members of the



Board of Directors. Several alternatives exist whereby the non-profit Board of Directors could be set up so that it interlocks with the Greenspace Commission membership. For instance, a majority of the members of the corporation's Board of Directors could be named as Greenspace Commission members. This would give the Greenspace Commission control through the Board of Directors of the non-profit corporation.

This corporation could be established to act as a land trust and accept easements as well as financial contributions. This corporation could hold title to property located in regions other than Fayette County, and could also be used to implement a regional plan for greenspace preservation. One of the factors motivating the recommendation to create this type of non-profit corporation is in consideration of the public reluctance to donate money and/or property interests to government. Reluctant donors could be approached through this non-profit corporation, which would be independent of public control. A non-profit can also act more quickly and with more discretion to acquire property than government can.

### ***Greenspace Funding Sources***

The Funding Subcommittee and Greenspace Commission fully reviewed many potential sources of funding and financial incentives to support greenspace acquisitions. The following sources are both feasible and appropriate to Kentucky and Lexington-Fayette County and are worthy of further investigation. The funding sources that are not recommended by the Commission are listed in Appendix E.

1. **Donation of lands:** Reduce property taxes as an incentive for donation. Change the state tax laws whereby special exemptions for donation of land could be increased or enable property owners to donate development rights. Another incentive is to decrease a property's value when a property owner donates an easement or the property's development rights.
2. **Billboard Tax:** Increase the cost of a permit for existing billboards in Fayette County. The increase in the cost of the permit could be based upon the revenue generated by the billboard. Because billboards are in general a detriment to greenspace, there is a reasonable nexus between the existence of the billboard and the Greenspace Program. The legalities of taxing billboard revenues should be studied.
3. **Increasing Park Improvement Fees:** The ordinance creating the Park Improvement Fee has been in existence since 1966 with only one change in 1972. The current fees were based on 1972 building cost figures. The fees could be increased to reflect the 1993 cost of maintaining and creating parks/recreational facilities, including the greenspace system. An increase in the Park Improvement Fee would provide additional funds for park acquisitions. The ordinance could be amended to permit some funds to be dedicated for greenspace activities because of the connection between recreation and the values of greenspace.

This plan has established that the greenspace system is an important element of urban design, the rural-urban relationship, and the quality of life desired in this community. New growth increases the demand for greenspace, just as it increases the demand for recreation facilities. New growth also impacts farmland, agricultural soils, and the many other resources listed in this report as significant to the Bluegrass identity. Thus new development creates the need for long-term protection of greenspace resources.

4. **Inheritance Tax:** There seems to be widespread support among property owners to bring the state inheritance tax in line with federal estate tax statutes and regulations. Amendment of Kentucky's estate tax statutes would result in an approximately \$80,000,000 annual lost revenue. This would have a tremendous impact on the state budget.

Instead, a change in the state income tax by creating a larger deduction or exemption from taxation for the donation of property interests should be addressed. Increasing the deductions/exemptions would create an incentive for property owners to donate development rights and conservation easements. The donation or transfer of a development right lessens a property's value, which ultimately would or should have an impact on the value of the property for property tax purposes. The statutes and regulations concerning property valuation for property tax purposes should be revised if needed to ensure that this is required. This should provide another incentive for land owners to dedicate their lands for greenspace through donation of a conservation easement or development right.

This limited change to the estate tax structure would have a far smaller impact on state revenues than an across-the-board change. It would also confer a private benefit only on those property owners willing to provide a substantial public benefit: a commitment that their land will remain in agricultural or other open space use.

5. **Hotel/Motel Tax:** Currently there is an approximately 11% cap on the hotel/motel tax. A 1% increase in the hotel/motel tax would have to be approved by both the local government and the State Legislature. A 1% increase in the current tax would generate approximately \$670,000 per year for the Greenspace program. A reasonable connection between tourism and implementation of the Greenspace Plan exists, in that greenspace promotes tourism.
6. **ISTEA Funds:** Under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) through the Federal Department of Transportation, there are two sources of funding. First, the local government, through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), receives a set allotment of funds from the state. These funds can be used for many activities eligible under the ISTEA program. A small percentage of these funds should be reserved for Greenspace Plan implementation. Secondly, there is a larger amount of funds that is awarded by



the Transportation Cabinet through statewide competition. There are greenspace projects that would be eligible and highly competitive under all three of the competitive ISTEA funding programs – Transportation Enhancements, Scenic Byways, and the National Recreational Trails Fund Grant Program.

7. **Targeting of Other Existing Funding Sources:** The Greenspace Commission strongly recommends that emphasis be placed on funding through any and all available state and federal programs. In addition to ISTEA, those include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Rails to Trails
  - b. Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
- Community Development Block Grants
  - c. Land and Water Conservation Funds
  - d. Kentucky River Authority
  - e. Kentucky Heritage Council
  - f. Urban Forestry
  - g. Kentucky Community Rivers and Streams Grant Program
  - h. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
  - i. National Trust for Historic Preservation - Critical Issues Fund
  - j. Department of Fish & Wildlife Wallop Breau Fund (for boat ramps) and annual acquisition funds for wildlife management areas.

#### **IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES FOR THE URBAN LINKAGE SYSTEM SUMMARIZED BY PROPERTY TYPES**

Greenspace implementation involves much more than land acquisition and incentives to private property owners. It will also require new ways of thinking within public agencies, leading to new policies for planning, infrastructure improvements, and maintenance. This is especially true for the urban greenspace linkage system. Because there are so many different types of properties involved in the proposed linkage system, it will only be accomplished through a creative combination of many different types of implementation techniques. To help public agencies apply the proper policies and strategies, these are organized below according to the type of property that presents an opportunity for greenspace.

- ▶ Incorporate sidewalk improvements in all bridge / underpass construction projects.
- ▶ Implement improvements for at-grade intersections to reduce conflicts.
- ▶ Protect existing street trees during road improvement projects and infill development.
- ▶ Use new plantings to enhance attractiveness for both auto and non-auto users.
- ▶ Develop design standards to ensure safety for youth cyclists as well as adult cyclists and pedestrians. Design sidewalks with sufficient width to accommodate very young cyclists in addition to pedestrians.
- ▶ Develop design standards and signage for consistent, safe connections between on-street and off-street bikeways.
- ▶ Combine auto entrances when redevelopment occurs.
- ▶ Implement Bikeway Facilities Plan. Road corridor planning should also consider linked and safe pedestrian circulation and bikeway system.

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### ***Rural Road Remnants within the Urban Service Area***

#### **Examples:**

Squires Road  
Viley Road from New Circle Road  
to Old Frankfort Road

Higbee Mill Road  
Armstrong Mill Road  
Jonestown Road  
Beaumont farm roads

#### **Opportunities:**

- ▶ Provide good linkage to off-street system within neighborhoods.
- ▶ Road remnants are already paved and will have low construction costs.
- ▶ Retain appropriate scale and character through the width of road, existence of mature trees in canopy, rock fences, etc.
- ▶ Close to developed residential neighborhoods.
- ▶ Automobile traffic is usually local and not fast moving.



### Concerns:

- ▶ Development under current standards may remove roads or the qualities along them such as tree stands.
- ▶ Rural road remnants are short segments and do not provide through corridors.
- ▶ Roads lack sidewalks and currently there is no separation of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic.
- ▶ If rural roads are widened for safety or multiple use, the improvements could result in the removal of significant greenspace features such as trees, fences, etc.

### Implementation:

- ▶ Provide signage to connect to other Greenspace system elements and to alert auto drivers to the presence of pedestrians and bicyclists.
- ▶ Where road improvements are needed, study opportunities to retain rural road remnants for off-street use and construct new road corridor elsewhere or adjacent.
- ▶ Plan road improvements to maintain corridor's rural and greenspace character.
- ▶ Revise development regulations that will ensure identified greenspace linkages are retained and encouraged.

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### *Abandoned Railroad Right of Way*

#### Examples:

##### **Already abandoned:**

CSX (C&O) right of way from east end out to Fayette-Clark County line  
Outer portion of eastern CSX right of way between New Circle and I-75  
(fragmented by private use)

##### **Railroad lines now in use that could be abandoned in future:**

CSX spurs from Midland to New Circle and out Palumbo  
Southern line below McConnell Springs

#### Opportunities:

- ▶ Underpass exists beneath I-75.
- ▶ Link within urban neighborhoods and from urban to rural areas.

- ▶ Defined corridor with level grade, will meet ADA standards for lower construction costs.
- ▶ Mature trees in fence rows serve as buffer to surrounding land uses.
- ▶ Near significant resources, such as McConnell Spring and Town Branch.

#### **Concerns:**

- ▶ In the past abandoned railroad rights-of-way have been acquired or used by private property owners and are now too fragmented for trail purposes.
- ▶ Provision of security and privacy to adjacent agricultural uses.

#### **Implementation:**

- ▶ For lines already abandoned, acquire right of way quickly to keep it intact.
- ▶ For lines currently in use, acquire quickly should they become abandoned. For instance, the Southern line below McConnell Spring is now used only twice a week for Rand McNally. (There should be no greenspace / trail use adjacent to railroad lines until they are no longer active.)
- ▶ Use Rails to Trails technical assistance to work with adjacent property owners.
- ▶ Use ISTEA funding and work with civic groups (eg. Boy Scouts) for trails construction.
- ▶ Research similar trails elsewhere that have successfully dealt with security concerns.

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#### ***Stream Corridors***

##### **Examples:**

##### **Undeveloped areas:**

S. Elkhorn from Harrodsburg Road  
to Clays Mill Road  
E. Hickman tributaries in vicinity of  
southern Urban Service Area boundary  
Cane Run through Coldstream to I-75/I-64

N. Elkhorn tributaries  
from Liberty Road to I-75  
Cave Creek from New Circle  
to Dunbar High School  
Town Branch tributary from Georgetown  
Road to Masterson Station Park



**Developed areas:**

West Hickman from New Circle south  
into Veteran's Park  
(multiple private property owners)  
Town Branch from Downtown  
to New Circle Road

Vaughn's Branch from Mason Headley  
to Versailles Road  
Cane Run from Lex Mark  
to Newtown Pike  
Wolf Run

**Opportunities:**

- ▶ Can provide safe, offstreet trails for recreational and young bicyclists.
- ▶ Can combine improved and more cost-effective flood management with recreation and natural resource protection.
- ▶ Can enhance design of roads by creating a parkway effect where streams and new streets coincide.
- ▶ Can provide urban-rural linkage.
- ▶ Can provide natural habitat for wildlife and green relief in highly urbanized areas.
- ▶ Have potential for interpretation of natural and historic features.

**Concerns:**

- ▶ Sizing of bridges and culverts according to current standards will prohibit pedestrian passage beneath the roadways.
- ▶ Development and construction of sewer and storm drainage improvements in the past have degraded natural qualities of streams through channelization, use of riprap, filling of the floodplain, and removal of trees.
- ▶ In developed areas, there are multiple property owners and encroachment of buildings and walls on the corridor.
- ▶ Some land uses along the stream corridors are incompatible with and dangerous for the corridor's use as greenway.
- ▶ Water quality must be improved if recreational access to the stream is encouraged.
- ▶ Current regulations allow fill and development in the floodplain up to the floodway. This reduces the storage capacity of the floodplain, increases the velocity and erosive power of storm flows, and eliminates valued natural qualities of streams, such as vegetation, wildlife and open space.

- ▶ Issues relating to land ownership and maintenance need to be resolved. Property owners may be concerned about security and liability from public use of trails. Private maintenance will be inconsistent. Maintenance will be difficult for many areas that are inaccessible by vehicle.

### **Implementation:**

To determine the best combination of methods to protect stream corridors and create greenspace linkages along them, there should be an in-depth evaluation of multi-use potential for stormwater management and greenspace, current and potential floodplain development and preservation standards, legal issues, public/private ownership considerations, citizen involvement potential, liability and security issues, and maintenance techniques. The successful methods other communities have used to protect greenways and to develop public access and trails along natural drainages should be examined. See also the specific proposals of the Greenway Plan listed in Appendix B.

#### **■ Multi-Use Planning for Recreation and Stormwater Management:**

- ▶ Coordinate planning for greenspace linkages, public access, and the extensive drainage improvements recommended by the Stormwater Study. Greenspace purposes can be combined with cost-effective solutions for solving and preventing flood management problems. Use the small area plan process to create a greenspace / flood management demonstration project.
- ▶ Evaluate the detention basin locations proposed in the recent Stormwater Study for their greenspace potential. Also consider the potential for detention basins within designated greenspace sites and linkages. Detention improvement design should be compatible with the greenspace values and uses of the greenway.
- ▶ Evaluate methods to strengthen protection for floodplains that are part of the greenspace system.

### **Natural Resource Protection and Enhancement:**

- ▶ Preserve major drainage ways by maintaining their original contours, with minimum disturbance for recreation, drainage improvements, and infrastructure construction.
- ▶ Within designated greenspace stream corridors, protect major tree stands, valuable trees, vegetative cover, rare or valuable plant and animal species and their habitats, rock outcroppings, steep slopes, sinkholes, and underground streams.
- ▶ Within greenways that have been cleared for farming or urban use, create buffer strips by planting trees and vegetative cover that will reestablish natural habitats, reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff, and provide screening and an attractive



environment. Add trees and vegetative cover with flowers and fall color to improve the appearance of greenways.

■ **Recreation and Trails:**

- ▶ Develop trails and recreation facilities on a case-by-case basis. Work with property owners to determine level of interest and concerns for greenway protection and public access
- ▶ Be vigilant and take advantage of opportunities for easements and acquisition, with long-term goal of corridor protection and access.
- ▶ Balance recreation use with preservation of the natural qualities of greenways. Intensive recreational development should only occur where it will not cause erosion, contribute to flood hazards, or destroy valued natural qualities of the corridor.

■ **Road Construction:**

- ▶ Change bridge and culvert design standards where greenspace system elements are present to accommodate potential for trail passage beneath roadways, to minimize channelization and destruction of vegetation, and to incorporate native materials such as limestone.
- ▶ Change road locational planning and design standards to protect and enhance stream qualities and to preserve views. Implement to ensure consistent design of roads that will be constructed in segments as parcel development occurs.

■ **Multi-Use of Stream Corridors for Other Public Improvements:**

- ▶ Expand public uses within greenways by allowing multi-purpose use of easements where feasible for recreation, utilities, storm drainage and sewers. Develop new design concepts and standards for public improvement and utility construction that will prevent damage to the natural / recreational qualities of stream corridors designated as part of the greenspace system. Combine objectives where possible, such as use of areas cleared and leveled for laying of pipe as a trail corridor.
- ▶ Continue efforts to upgrade water quality by locating and documenting untreated discharges and enforcing improvements.

■ **Ownership and Maintenance of Greenspace Stream Corridors:**

- ▶ Consider whether greenspace stream corridors should remain in private ownership or should be owned and maintained by the public. This should be examined in conjunction with planning for detention basin maintenance. For example, the Division of Engineering is recognizing the need to own and maintain detention

ordinances should consider whether each resource listed in the criteria is adequately protected, and if not, what techniques would best protect it.

The second step is a checklist based on practical considerations. The Pragmatic Matrix can be used on a yearly basis or as often as warranted, as funding opportunities arise and properties become available for acquisition and/or development. The two-step prioritization method was refined through Subcommittee discussion and a trial run of the matrix based on an on-site review of a sampling of properties.

**Values Matrix:** To compare each site or linkage opportunity to other similar opportunities, four checklists were devised, based on Greenspace values for four geographic areas: the Rural Service Area, Urban Service Area, Downtown/ Commercial Areas, and Rural Settlements. Each checklist is divided into three categories entitled Special Designations, Community Use Patterns, and Resource Types.

The items in the Special Designations category are the same in the checklists for all four geographic areas. In this category, resources that have been designated as significant by groups or agencies other than the Greenspace Commission can be noted. For example, Special Designations may include a site's listing on the National Register or reference in the Comprehensive Plan as the location of a significant botanical area. Within the Community Use Patterns category, a site's relationship to staging areas, trails, parks, schools and other significant elements within the Greenspace Plan is noted.

The Resource Types category includes cultural and natural resources as well as recreational features that are associated with each of the four geographic areas. The checklist of potential natural and cultural resources that might occur in each area was compiled from two sources: the Greenspace Inventory and the list of features that are characteristic to the landscape types found in each area. For example, prime soil is listed as a significant resource type for the Rural Service Area, but not for Downtown / Commercial Districts. The proposed Greenspace Values Matrix for sites in the Rural Service Area, Rural Settlements, Downtown / Commercial Areas, and Urban Service Area is in Appendix D.

**Scoring Based on the Matrix:** Each Greenspace opportunity (site or linkage) will receive a score based on the number of checklist items present on that property. Sites that include many checklist items in the three categories of the Greenspace Values Matrix will have a higher score than those containing only a few of the items. The opportunities will be grouped according to their scores, but should not be ranked. The scores are a general means of comparing one opportunity to another.

**Pragmatic Matrix:** Each Greenspace opportunity will then be evaluated according to the concerns listed in the Pragmatic Matrix, which includes items in categories such as timeliness (site is threatened); connection/ proximity (site is key to linkage); and feasibility (grant money is available). Opportunities will again be grouped according to scores and compared to groupings of high-scoring sites from the Greenspace Value Matrix to determine which sites should have the highest priority for implementation.



## VI. GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN

This chapter describes the steps needed to implement the Greenspace Plan. Under **"Critical Next Steps,"** this chapter summarizes the further studies that should be pursued as soon as possible to complete the greenspace planning effort, detail the implementation proposals of Chapter VI, and incorporate greenspace values into the development review process. Under "Responsibilities," it identifies the many **existing agencies** that can help create portions of the greenspace system and the **specific responsibilities** recommended for each. The issues that must be considered and resolved by the **Update process** to integrate the Greenspace Plan recommendations as a new Comprehensive Plan element are listed. Finally, this chapter recommends the **educational programs and regional coordination** that will be needed to support the greenspace effort.

### CRITICAL NEXT STEPS FOR COMPLETING GREENSPACE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Greenspace Plan effort has been a major leap forward towards developing a significant new concept in Lexington-Fayette County community planning. Yet there is still considerable work to be done to detail the Physical Plan proposals, evaluate the array of choices for implementation described in Chapter V, research and draft ordinances, and adopt them. The new ordinances, development review procedures, design standards and funding sources that will create the greenspace system cannot be put in place overnight. The Greenspace Commission and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government must continue to pursue these strategies with the same energy and commitment that is reflected in this Plan.

The many studies and actions needed to complete the greenspace effort are detailed in this chapter. Several of these should be tackled first to provide the foundation for implementation efforts. These include some fundamental issues that must be resolved and the translation of Physical Plan concepts into property-specific recommendations. These studies will provide an opportunity to involve affected property owners in the greenspace implementation decisions.

- **The first and most urgent priority** is to refine the information in this Plan identifying significant greenspace resources and implement the ordinances and procedures that are needed to **incorporate greenspace values and proposals into the development review process. *These efforts should begin immediately, so that important greenspace opportunities are not lost in the development process.***
  - ▶ As a first step, *current ordinances should be reviewed* to find short-term opportunities for protecting greenspace resources.
  - ▶ The information in this Plan – the inventory maps, the identified "significant resource concentrations," the urban greenspace sites and

linkages, the list of valued greenspace resources in the Prioritization Matrix – should be *refined as necessary so that it can be incorporated in development review.*

- ▶ The major effort required to *evaluate the various proposed regulatory techniques and translate them into adopted ordinances* should be initiated.
- **Coordinated planning for greenspace and stormwater management:** The ongoing Stormwater Study and planned extensive drainage improvements are an excellent opportunity to accomplish the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan linkage proposals for stream corridors while finding cost-effective solutions for solving and preventing flood management problems.

The Divisions of Planning and Engineering should work together to coordinate planning, land acquisition, and improvements for storm drainage and greenspace linkage. A *comprehensive study* should be done, involving property owners, to determine the best methods for ownership and maintenance, improving protection of floodplains, using detention basins as greenspace and vice versa, changing drainage improvement design standards to protect the natural / cultural features in stream corridors, preventing security and liability concerns, and developing recreational and trail access. The methods other communities have used to protect greenways and to develop public access and trails along natural drainages should be examined.

- **Prototype small area plans for developing areas** should be done to detail the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan proposals and identify the specific properties and protection measures involved.
  - ▶ *Areas where development is imminent or ongoing* – such as the Reynolds property or South Elkhorn / Hickman Creek area, could be emphasized.
  - ▶ This effort could also be combined with the *coordinated stormwater management / greenspace planning* and the *development of demonstration projects* (below). A small area plan for the Viley Extended / Leestown / Masterson Station Park area could apply the various techniques for coordinated stormwater management, floodplain protection, and greenway preservation and enhancement.
  - ▶ In general, ***Greenspace Physical Plan proposals should be incorporated in every other planning effort***, whether the Comprehensive Plan, Downtown study, Transportation Plan, Historic Preservation Plan, corridor plans, Paris Pike Small Area Plan, etc.
- **Demonstration projects** should be pursued to show Lexington-Fayette citizens how the greenspace system will work. This could be a combination of special events that take advantage of existing pieces of the system, such as the Squires



bikeway, and/or strategic improvements to enhance, link together, and extend those existing pieces to create a more comprehensive system, such as along the proposed South Elkhorn / West Hickman linear park. Completion of the West Hickman Creek "Ribbon Park" effort, with linkages from Veterans Park to Squires Road, Bellefonte Drive, and Higbee Mill Road, is a timely opportunity.

- **Rural area proposals:** Several Rural Greenspace Physical Plan proposals must be refined to support implementation – the precise boundaries of the Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas, the locations of staging areas, small area plans for each staging area, and design guidelines for staging areas. A small area plan should be undertaken for one of the Rural Focus Areas to detail resource protection and recreation strategies. The Paris Pike Small Area Plan should incorporate Greenspace Plan recommendations.
- **Legal issues:** All land use regulations adopted to further greenspace purposes must be legally sound. This should be considered in the evaluation of potential greenspace protection techniques. A study of other communities with successful greenspace programs could determine ways that the legal issues were addressed.

## SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CREATING THE GREENSPACE SYSTEM

Although the Greenspace Commission has been charged by the LFUCG to take leadership in planning for and developing a greenspace system, many existing local and regional government agencies and associated organizations have activities and missions that intersect with greenspace proposals. To be truly effective, efforts to carry out this Plan must be undertaken jointly, with each agency playing its part.

The process of developing this Plan has already laid the groundwork for an ongoing cooperative effort. Several LFUCG agencies collaborated and pooled their staff resources to support the Greenspace Commission's work. It is important for these agencies to continue to work together, to coordinate their efforts. For instance, the Corridors Committee could emphasize newly-installed on-street bikeways for street tree planting, to create more pleasant routes and encourage bike use.

The major players that will take responsibilities for implementing the Greenspace Plan and the contributions they should make are as follows:

### *DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT*

The Department of Housing and Community Development has spearheaded and coordinated LFUCG agency and staff support for the Greenspace Commission. The many administrative activities that will continue to fall under this role as the Greenspace Plan is implemented are too numerous to list. The Department of Housing and Community Development has several divisions that will conduct various activities with the Greenspace Plan. The divisions are the Commissioner's Office, Division of Planning,

and the Historic Preservation Office.

### ***The Commissioner's Office***

The Commissioner's Office includes the Commissioner of Housing and Community Development, administration assistants, and office assistants and is responsible for coordinating and administering all of its divisions. The office will supply primary secretarial support and staff for the implementation of the Greenspace Plan.

Two duties the Commissioner's Office should pursue are:

- Coordinate a complete **inventory of all government-owned properties** that may have greenspace potential, such as utility properties and easements, drainage facilities and easements, public housing developments, and the grounds of public building such as the Courthouse. Work with the Greenspace Commission to develop recommendations for enhancing the greenspace role of these properties.
- Provide a **liaison function with private property owners** concerning potential greenspace acquisitions, conservation easements and other voluntary protection measures. Provide advice and assistance to property owners and citizens groups, such as the Old Frankfort Pike Corridor residents, on maintenance of their special resources and the funding sources that are available to assist them with their preservation goals.

### ***Division of Planning***

For many years the Lexington-Fayette Planning Commission through its staff, the Division of Planning, has carried the flag on planning efforts related to greenspace, and will continue to be one of the primary agents for creating the greenspace system. Measures to protect greenspace through zoning ordinance amendments and the development review process must be evaluated, adopted and applied by the Division of Planning. There are also several follow-up studies needed to complete the greenspace planning effort. (In addition, the Division of Planning will be involved in determining the amendments to other Comprehensive Plan elements that will be needed to integrate the Greenspace Plan. These are discussed below under "Integration with the Comprehensive Plan.") Division of Planning responsibilities will include:

- As a first priority, evaluate current ordinances establishing standards for **development review** and amend them as necessary to ensure that **greenspace protection measures are considered wherever significant greenspace resources are found**. Undertake any further studies needed to incorporate the Greenspace Prioritization Criteria, greenspace inventory maps, and significant resource concentrations identified in this Plan into the development review process as a guide to greenspace resources in need of protection.



- **Evaluate the full range of potential regulatory techniques** for accomplishing greenspace purposes, and implement those that are feasible and would be most effective.
- As a part of this evaluation, consider creation of one or more **Greenspace Zoning Districts or Overlay District(s)** for implementing the Greenspace system. Determine the regulations, standards, design guidelines and incentives that would be appropriate to Greenspace Zones. For instance, different measures may be needed to accomplish Plan recommendations for stream corridors, for significant rural resources, or for staging areas in rural settlements.
- **Refine the boundaries of the Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas**, based on field studies and input from area residents and property owners. Determine the best measures for increasing the level of protection for significant resources in the rural area, whether through greenspace zoning, increased minimum lot size, or the like, in coordination with the Comprehensive Plan Update effort.
- Pursue **detailed planning** to transform the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan concepts into site-specific proposals **for various areas of the city**. This should be done through small area plans for existing neighborhoods or sectors and through infill planning. It should also be done for every major development plan that is reviewed by the Planning Commission, with urgent priority given to sites where development is imminent, such as the Reynolds property. The South Broadway Corridor Plan is a model for the detailed planning that needs to be done.
- Conduct an evaluation to **identify rural staging area locations and small area plans for each staging area**, which should be adopted as an amendment to this Plan. Develop and implement **use restrictions and design guidelines for development in rural staging areas**. Also pursue **downzoning of existing commercial zoning in the rural service area that has unused development potential but is not appropriate for development according to the policies of this Plan**.
- Work with the Division of Engineering to conduct a **comprehensive study of the potential to coordinate planning, land acquisition, and improvements for storm drainage and greenspace linkage along stream corridors**. As a part of this study, evaluate current zoning/subdivision/development plan **protections for floodplains and sinkholes** and the **design and maintenance standards for drainage improvements**. Implement a comprehensive program that will afford these resources sufficient protection to meet the multi-use goals of both stormwater management and the Greenspace Plan, as also expressed in the Greenways Plan.
- Work with the Division of Engineering to prepare a **prototype small area plan** for a developing urban area, such as the Viley Extended / Leestown / Masterson Station Park area, using **natural drainage to create a consistent, comprehensive greenspace linkage system**. Use this plan as an opportunity to apply the various

techniques for coordinated stormwater management, floodplain protection, and greenway preservation and enhancement.

- Review all **greenways** to determine if they meet the multi-use purposes of the greenspace system and should be included. Consider adoption of regulatory requirements that may have different purposes and controls for greenways that are not a part of the Greenspace System.
- Work with the LFUCG Corridors Committee to pursue creation of a "**Corridor Overlay District**," as recommended in the Corridor Enhancement Study, to accomplish the dual purposes of that study and the Greenspace Plan.
- Work with the Kentucky Heritage Council's Rural Preservation Program to conduct a **scenic assessment** of the entire county. Expand the "Views From the Road" survey or other methods to cover all significant rural and urban landscape types. Through volunteer or LFUCG efforts, apply the scenic assessment method to additional areas.
- Conduct **resource assessments** of other resources considered significant to greenspace, such as tree-lined canopied roads and wetlands, and incorporate the data base into Greenspace resource assessment maps and checklist review procedures.
- Work with the Kentucky River Authority on a plan to **preserve the palisades area and to develop a regional system of River parks, trails and recreational attractions.**

### ***Division of Historic Preservation***

The Division of Historic Preservation was created by Article 13 of the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Code of Ordinances. This office is charged with activities related to conserving historic structures, districts and resources in Lexington-Fayette County. The staff serves both the Historic Preservation Commission (a fifteen member volunteer government board) and the Board of Architectural Review (a five member historic district design review board).

Historic Preservation staff survey historic resources within the urban and rural areas of the county, provide technical assistance to owners of historic properties and administer the day to day activities of the Division, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Board of Architectural Review. The Division of Historic Preservation should pursue the following programs related to greenspace implementation:

- Complete the **Historic Context Study, the Long Range Historic Preservation Plan, and supporting historic surveys**, and incorporate the inventory information and recommendations into the Greenspace Plan.



- ▶ The **Historic Context Study** will analyze the city through stages of its physical, cultural and economic development. The historic resources it identifies that still remain from each stage should be protected and interpreted for the public through the greenspace system. For instance, tobacco warehouses reflect a unique aspect of this community's development, and some should be preserved through adaptive reuse.
- ▶ Within the Long Range Historic Preservation Plan, develop the concept of an **urban cultural parks system**, such as the Erie Canal in New York, that highlights the city's special cultural resources and the architectural, planning and engineering features that give a sense of the community's history. Develop an on-site heritage education curriculum, in concert with the School Board, to meet KERA requirements.

## OTHER URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

### *Division of Parks and Recreation*

Many aspects of the greenspace system are park and recreation-related improvements. Park and greenspace planning must continue to be closely intertwined. Specific greenspace proposals that are under Parks and Recreation's purview include the following.

- Work with the **Comprehensive Plan Update** Committee on park planning issues related to greenspace (see below, Integration with the Comprehensive Plan).
- Continue to coordinate **bike/pedestrian path planning and design** with the MPO, for off-street bikeways.
- Work with the Division of Planning to coordinate the **location and design of every park** with the greenspace linkage system, wherever possible.
- Work with the Division of Planning to refine and implement proposals for securing public recreational access in the **rural Focus Areas**.
- Study the possibility of **increasing park improvement fees** to help implement the Greenspace Plan, and coordinate establishment of the legal basis for the fee increase with the Comprehensive Plan Update process.

### *Division of Engineering*

The Division of Engineering is currently planning a major stormwater management program, which will involve land acquisition and construction of drainage improvements. This is a timely opportunity to combine flood management purposes

with implementation of the greenspace linkage proposals for stream corridors in the urban area.

Infrastructure improvements can be designed to meet the multiple purposes of the greenspace system as well as the functions of storm drainage, sewage collection, and utility delivery. However greenspace planning and infrastructure planning can be at cross purposes if they are not coordinated. Construction of sewer, storm drainage, and utility improvements can damage the very resources that the greenspace system is intended to protect.

For instance, a section of designated greenway within Cold Stream Farm was identified as having potential as a significant greenspace system link. Even as the Greenspace Physical Plan was being prepared, construction of a sewer line within the stream corridor removed some of the natural features that gave the site its greenspace value. In the future, these opportunities for combining planning and design for both greenspace and infrastructure purposes should not be missed.

The idea of using drainage and flood control improvements for open space and recreation was recommended in the Greenways Plan. These recommendations can be accomplished as Engineering develops flood management plans. The construction of sewage system trunk lines often occurs within stream corridors. The design of these systems should be carefully coordinated with the Greenspace Plan to provide trail opportunities where feasible and to prevent unnecessary destruction of natural stream qualities.

- **Coordinate greenspace planning with stormwater management planning.** Work with the Division of Planning on a comprehensive program to accomplish the multiple purposes of flood management and greenspace (see responsibilities under "Division of Planning," above). The recent Stormwater Study should be reviewed by the Greenspace Commission for consistency with the Greenspace Plan. The Division of Engineering should review the Greenspace Plan, become familiar with its proposals, and consider ways to accomplish them in cooperation with engineering improvements.
- Plan the proposed **detention/storage improvements** for developed and developing areas of the city with greenspace purposes in mind. As detention basin locations are determined, make specific recommendations concerning the greenspace opportunities each can provide. Similarly, potential greenspace sites should be reviewed for use as detention sites. Detention improvements on sites with greenspace values should be designed and maintained with care to preserve and enhance those values and resources. See also the Greenway Plan, page 10.
- Adopt **design standards for flood control and sewage system improvements that preserve and enhance greenspace resources.** When working within greenspace system drainages that have natural qualities, design effective solutions to avoid channelization or to recreate natural channels, to relocate trenching away from



the drip line of trees, and to minimize vegetation removal. Work with Division of Planning on a revision of floodplain preservation regulations to reduce the impacts of development, which can remove natural flood storage capacity and lead to the necessity to channelize streams. Develop design solutions for gravity sewers that can avoid damage to natural watercourses and riparian trees.

- Work together with the MPO, the Division of Planning, KYTC, and the Greenspace Commission on all recommendations concerning **roadway and bikeway planning and design.**

### *Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Corridors Committee*

The Corridors Committee assisted the Division of Planning in preparing of the Corridor Enhancement Study and has planned and implemented corridor landscaping improvements street by street. The Greenspace Plan furthers many of the proposals of the Corridor Enhancement Study, and recommends the following steps to merge greenspace and corridors planning. (See also the specific proposals in Section 1, Chapter IV, under "Urban Greenspace Linkages.")

- Support the Division of Planning's effort to pursue creation of a **"Corridor Overlay District,"** to accomplish the purposes of the Corridor Enhancement Study and the Greenspace Plan.
- Consider the recommended Greenspace Plan corridor enhancement priorities and design proposals as a **guide for further corridor planning.** Work with the Divisions of Planning and Engineering to integrate greenspace concepts in corridor design / landscape plans, such as bikeways, preservation of streams to create a parkway effect, installation of intersection improvements and safe crossing facilities where greenspace system trails cross streets, etc.

### *REGIONAL AGENCIES OUTSIDE THE URBAN COUNTY GOVERNMENT*

#### *Metropolitan Planning Organization*

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) coordinates transportation planning for roadway, bikeway, and transit improvements in Lexington-Fayette County as well as Jessamine County. As a regional planning agency with close ties to the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, the MPO is in a pivotal position for furthering essential greenspace concerns. The MPO should pursue the following activities related to Greenspace Plan policies.

- Create a **new design vision and guidelines for roadway improvements** that consider greenspace resource preservation and aesthetic values as well as safety and efficiency, both for Lexington-Fayette County roadways and regional

connections with surrounding counties. This should be done in concert with KYTC, the Division of Engineering, the Greenspace Commission, the Corridors Committee and other interest groups. Highway design should not be divorced from other important community goals. The Greenspace Plan outlines the new approach towards highway and road design that is expected in the future.

- Coordinate **corridor enhancement and protection measures** with roadway improvement design and management procedures, for I-75, I-64, and the major arterials recommended by the Greenspace Commission as priorities for the Corridors Committee.
- Complete **bikeway planning and implementation** throughout the community to integrate an on-street and off-street bikeway system with the greenspace linkage system. Develop design solutions to the problems of safe transitions between the on-street and off-street bikeway system and of pedestrian and bicyclist conflicts on joint use trails.
- Incorporate **bikeway, parkway, and landscaping recommendations** within the design of new roads that are shown as part of the greenspace system, such as the Newtown and Viley extensions. Work with KYTC and the LFUCG Division of Engineering to ensure that these design recommendations are respected for state road projects.
- Incorporate greenspace-oriented **design details where bike and pedestrian trails cross streets**, such as room for walkways beneath culverts and bridges, safe pedestrian/bicyclist crossing lights at major intersections, and sidewalk/bike path improvements at overpasses.
- Coordinate bikeway and pedestrian improvements in the greenspace linkage system with the **Transit Center and transit stops**, especially Downtown.
- Support **dedication of a portion of local ISTE A funds and grant applications for the competitive ISTE A programs** for greenspace projects.

### ***Fayette County Public Schools***

Schools are very important destinations that should be linked with neighborhoods and parks through the greenspace system. Schools can also benefit from proximity to greenspace for KERA-related field trips.

- Coordinate the **location and design of every school** with the greenspace linkage system, wherever possible. Consider greenspace values and opportunities in the selection of new school sites and the design of school entrances and grounds.
- Work with the Greenspace Commission and Division of Planning staff to develop



curricula for using the greenspace system for **environmental and cultural heritage education**, as recommended by KERA. Begin with a demonstration area, such as McConnell Springs.

#### *University of Kentucky*

- Work cooperatively with the Greenspace Commission and LFUCG to **accomplish proposals of the Greenspace Physical Plan involving UK property**, such as the Arboretum, South Farm, Coldstream Farm, Spindletop, and smaller sites such as the potential UK property between Winburn School and the Library.

#### *Kentucky River Authority*

- Work with the Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Lexington-Fayette Planning Commission and Greenspace Commission, the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet, and surrounding counties to develop and implement a long-term **plan for preserving the palisades area** and developing regional parks and attractions.
- Through a cooperative regional effort, develop a **trails system** along the terraces, a **recreational / tourism loop** encompassing the Valley View Ferry, Ravens Run, Elk Lick Sanctuary, the locks and dams, High Bridge, and private commercial facilities such as at Clays Ferry, and **new public access facilities and public boat ramps** at roads terminating at the River.

#### *Kentucky American Water Company*

- Work cooperatively with the Greenspace Commission and LFUCG to **accomplish proposals of the Greenspace Physical Plan involving Kentucky American property**, such as land holdings at the Kentucky River and the reservoir.

### **INTEGRATION WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

***With the adoption of this plan, greenspace becomes one of the defining urban design and rural preservation concepts of the Comprehensive Plan.*** The Greenspace Plan has been adopted as an element of the Comprehensive Plan. However, the concepts and recommendations that are basic to the Greenspace Plan should also be integrated throughout the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

There are several unresolved questions concerning Comprehensive Plan policies relating to greenspace that may result in amendments to other Comprehensive Plan elements. These should be tackled by the Planning Commission and the Comprehensive Plan

Update Committee. In addition, the Greenspace Plan can provide useful background information for the Comprehensive Plan Update effort. The uses of this information should be determined by the Update Committee, Planning Commission, and ultimately the Urban County Council. Specific issues raised in this Plan that should be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan Update include:

- The growth of the Lexington-Fayette County region creates pressure to alter the **Urban Service Boundary**, which may lead to loss of significant greenspace resources and incompatibilities between urban and rural uses. Greenspace designation should provide guidance on this question. Implementation of Greenspace protection measures should play a role in counteracting pressure in areas where expansion of the boundary is undesirable, or in buffering urban impacts where expansion occurs. This issue should be studied to determine the role Greenspace should play and the specific techniques proposed in this Plan that would be useful. Recommendations for study include the following:
  - ▶ Identify the possible *urban expansion pressure points* at the edge of the Urban Service Area where significant greenspace resources exist, and determine means to preserve the greenspace and/or relieve the development pressure where appropriate.
  - ▶ Identify *existing problem areas / incompatibilities between urban and rural activities* and investigate means to correct these and avoid future problems.
  - ▶ Add *greenspace values and identified significant greenspace resources as criteria for determining USA and RAC boundaries*.
- Continue to encourage more efficient development of the urban service area through **incentives for infill** of vacant parcels within existing neighborhoods, which provide additional incentives or benefits for development, thus relieving pressure to expand the urban service area.
- Substantially revise the section on **park and recreation facilities** to include Greenspace Plan recommendations. In particular:
  - ▶ Overlay the *proposed locations for neighborhood and community parks with the list of potential urban greenspace sites*, those with significant greenspace resources or those that are a part of the linkage system. Determine if a greenspace site could meet the park need for that area, and, if so, show it on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
  - ▶ Incorporate the proposal to secure additional public recreational access in the *rural Focus Areas*.
  - ▶ Consider whether the *Park Improvement Fee* should be increased for greenspace implementation purposes. If so, help create a strong legal basis



through Comprehensive Plan policy.

- Consider whether the **Land Use Plan** in the Comprehensive Plan needs to be revised to support application of greenspace implementation techniques, in particular:
  - ▶ *Purchase of Development Rights* – the areas where purchase of rights will be allowed / encouraged should be designated and the value of the rights must be determined. Although this could be done by ordinance, support in the Plan would create a more enduring and predictable program.
  - ▶ *Proposals for increased protection of rural area resources* – Emphasize preservation of "Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas," "Significant Rural Resource Concentrations," and "Focus Areas." Determine the best measures for increasing the level of protection for significant resources in the rural area, whether through overlay zoning, increased minimum lot size, or the like, in coordination with the Division of Planning effort to refine boundaries of the significant rural resource areas.
  - ▶ *The Greenspace Zoning District* – Determine the appropriate method for authorizing use of one or more Greenspace Districts or Overlay Zones as a part of the Land Use Plan, if determined to be an effective method for greenspace implementation – see also Greenspace Tools and Techniques, Chapter V.
  - ▶ *Proposals for Rural Staging Areas* – There should be no misunderstanding; this proposal, as discussed in Chapter V under the Rural Physical Greenspace Plan, does not encourage or allow inappropriate rural growth not otherwise contemplated by the Land Use Plan. A cross-reference in the land use policies for the general rural area would be helpful, clearly stating the intent of the staging areas, the limitations on their scope and uses, and requirements for compatibility with the general rural area land use policies and with surrounding landscape types. Also incorporate the recommendations concerning locational planning, small area plans, and design and use guidelines for staging area facilities. Where new development of parcels with existing commercial zoning would be inappropriate, recommend rezoning to general agricultural uses.
- The Greenspace Plan Goals have already been included in the overall Goals for the Update. **Cross-reference Greenspace Plan policies and recommendations in other sections of the Plan**, notably under:
  - ▶ *Policies* – Integrate Greenspace objectives and policies under: Major Growth Management Issues (Management of Development Directions, Environmental Considerations); Land Use Development Concepts (General Rural Use Areas, Transportation, Recreation); and Decision-making for

#### Governmental Services (Regional Planning).

- ▶ *Planning Concepts and Principles* – Include greenspace concepts where appropriate under Functional Planning Areas, Environmental Considerations, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Urban Activity Centers, and, if determined to be relevant, Urban Service Boundary.
- ▶ *The Land Use Plan* – See specific recommendations above. Also, include greenspace concepts under Land Use Relationships and add major Greenspace Physical Plan proposals under Land Use Plan for Suburban South Area and Suburban North Area.
- ▶ *Transportation* – Incorporate greenspace recommendations concerning road improvements, bikeways, and coordination of greenspace system with transit system (see summary under "Metropolitan Planning Organization," above). Mention greenspace concerns under Issues and Concepts, and add specific Greenspace Physical Plan proposals to the description of Proposed Road Improvements, e.g. for Viley, Newtown Extension, etc.
- ▶ *Community Facilities* – Under Sewers, discuss need to reduce untreated discharges to Town Branch and importance of minimizing damage to greenspace resources during sewer construction, particularly along stream corridors. Under Parks, see above, and specifically amend section on Greenway Parks to reflect Greenspace Plan. If Water Service receives more attention in the new plan, recommend greenspace protection and public use for Kentucky American properties adjacent to the reservoirs, as shown on the Physical Plan.
- ▶ *Plan Implementation* – Because the greenspace concepts are new to the community, paragraphs under Public Facilities Implementation and Development Regulation Administration about the special measures needed to implement the Greenspace Plan (e.g. purchase of development rights, overlay zones, development review, establishment of non-profit to oversee Greenspace Fund, etc.) would be helpful. Under Future Planning Work Elements, the future studies and activities outlined in this chapter should be mentioned.

### GREENSPACE EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

In both the short and long term, education is the key to creating a greenspace system that enhances all aspects of our daily lives. There are two main areas of need and opportunity in greenspace education:

- **First, there is the need to conduct a proactive campaign to help the public at large understand the Greenspace Plan proposals and to build support for**



accomplishing them.

- **Second, an important benefit of the greenspace system is that it presents an opportunity for hands-on learning about all aspects of the Bluegrass natural and cultural identity, both for community education and to meet KERA requirements.**

#### *Education about the Greenspace Plan Proposals*

**Education about Greenspace Principles and Benefits:** Successful implementation of the Greenspace Plan relies upon building a base of public support. A proactive educational effort is needed to present and interpret the Greenspace Plan to the public. This effort should help residents of Lexington-Fayette County and the region understand the basic principles and wide scope of what is meant by greenspace. It should strongly communicate the benefits of greenspace to the community. The educational campaign should emphasize that protecting greenspace is not a luxury but a necessity for attaining the quality of life that Bluegrass residents desire and expect. The educational effort should convey that greenspace and economic growth are interrelated, and that the Greenspace and Economic Development sections of the Comprehensive Plan, taken together, form the basis for a balanced, sustainable community.

**Education about the Plan Proposals:** More specifically, the educational effort should be a catalyst for public interest in greenspace and support for accomplishing the proposals of the Plan. Events such as a greenspace "conference" with speakers from other communities that have successful greenspace efforts and a family bicycling day on a demonstration section of the greenspace linkage system could help citizens and public officials envision what a completed Greenspace Plan would be like. Educational efforts will also be crucial to the success of legislative initiatives to fund greenspace and to adopt laws and regulations as recommended by this Plan.

**Education for Property Owners about Preservation Techniques:** Because much of the implementation of the Plan rests upon the initiative and cooperation of private property owners, there should be educational efforts for this target audience. For instance, rural property owners need information about how various greenspace techniques, such as conservation easements, will work and what the advantages and disadvantages may be.

**Education to Encourage Use of Greenspace Sites and Trails:** As each portion of the greenspace system is accomplished, people must be informed about how to access and use it. As people learn to enjoy greenspace tours, trails and parks, public support for completing the system will grow. Education will also be needed to ensure the safety of greenspace users, such as signage to notify auto drivers to watch for bicyclists, or to describe rules for multi-use of trails by pedestrians and bicyclists.

**Education Within Government:** For the Greenspace Plan to be successful, the concepts and proposals of this Plan must be considered and incorporated in the actions and policies of all other government agencies working in Lexington-Fayette County. There

should be an educational effort to familiarize other agencies, especially those listed above in this chapter, with the Greenspace Plan. All agencies should be encouraged to evaluate their programs for conflicts with greenspace values and opportunities to accomplish greenspace recommendations.

### ***Education about the Bluegrass Natural and Cultural Heritage***

Preservation of the heritage of a region requires more than protecting land and buildings. The residents of the region, and especially their children, must also be knowledgeable about their heritage if it is to remain a vital part of their lives. The proposed greenspace sites and linkages were selected because they embody the best of the diverse natural and cultural resources that make up the Bluegrass identity. These sites and linkages present a valuable opportunity for educational interpretation. Public education about the significance and sensitivity of these resources will also encourage their long-term protection.

**Greenspace Tours:** For instance, tours following roads and trails in the rural and urban area could be designated according to themes, such as: African-American history and culture; the story of Native Americans and settlement of the Bluegrass; the influence of tobacco or horse farms on the region's development; the geology, flora and fauna of the Kentucky River Valley and tributaries; and the features and water quality issues associated with limestone karst topography. Brochures, on-site displays and signage could be developed to link these themes with the resources. This could be a low cost way to increase public awareness of greenspace values.

**Greenspace and KERA:** The Kentucky Educational Reform Act (KERA) requires communities to develop educational programs that will take school children on-site to learn about the natural and cultural heritage of their region. Greenspace sites and linkages are a wonderful opportunity to meet the intent of KERA. For existing sites such as Waveland and new greenspace sites such as McConnell Spring, model curricula should be developed and disseminated throughout the school system that will turn these sites into classrooms. The Greenspace Commission should encourage the Fayette County Public Schools to make this a major long-term educational effort.

### **GREENSPACE REGIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Bluegrass is a geographic region, and preservation of the Bluegrass identity must become a regional concern. Many of the significant resources and greenspace proposals identified in this Plan extend into adjacent counties. The other Bluegrass counties should be encouraged to adopt the greenspace concept and do greenspace planning for their communities. To widen the impact of the Greenspace Plan, the Greenspace Commission and LFUCG should also pursue the following specific regional initiatives:

- ▶ Work with the tourism commissions of surrounding counties to encourage regional heritage tourism programs and loop tours, with Lexington as the hub.



Work with the Kentucky Tourism Cabinet to include greenspace resources in the state heritage tourism guidebook.

- ▶ Develop a regional plan for trails, parks, restored locks, recreation facilities, and land protection along the Kentucky River, from Camp Nelson to Frankfort, in conjunction with Clark, Madison, Jessamine, Garrard, Mercer, Woodford, Anderson and Franklin Counties, the Kentucky River Authority, and interested citizen groups.
- ▶ Coordinate greenspace planning with Jessamine County, to take advantage of the potential greenspace linkages that cross the county boundary, such as along West and East Hickman Creeks.
- ▶ Work with Clark County to acquire and develop a regional rails-to-trails corridor on the abandoned railroad right-of-way from Lexington to Mount Sterling and beyond.
- ▶ Identify significant regional scenic and historic road corridors, such as U.S. Highway 68 and the Old Dixie Highway into Richmond, and coordinate preservation planning with surrounding counties, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.
- ▶ Identify scenic overlooks of Fayette County from other counties, and work with those counties for their access and development.
- ▶ Communicate Greenspace Plan proposals to existing regional preservation groups, such as the Land and Nature Trust of the Bluegrass and the Elkhorn Intercounty Consortium, and enlist their support for implementation and more detailed regional greenspace planning for the resources of their concern.

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**Support for regional planning and cooperation on greenspace issues is very strong among Bluegrass residents (76%) and Lexington-Fayette County residents (80%).**

Seventy percent of Bluegrass residents agree there is a need for a regional planning organization for open space and farmland preservation. A majority would even support regional decision-making authority for this organization (51% of regional residents, 54% of Lexington-Fayette County residents).

– *Bluegrass Tomorrow Survey, MC2, 1991*

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## **SECTION 2: GREENSPACE PLANNING PROCESS**

### **I. CITIZEN LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLAN**

The Greenspace Plan is the culmination of the efforts of many Lexington-Fayette County citizens. Over many years and through many surveys and meetings, the people of this community continually raised the issue of the loss of greenspace and the treasured qualities of the Bluegrass. From the first official initiative to plan for a greenspace system, the Greenspace Steering Committee, through the current and ongoing work of the Greenspace Commission, Lexington-Fayette County citizens have directed the course of this effort. Through a rural mail-back survey, presentations to civic organizations, and countless discussions with friends and neighbors, the Commission kept its finger on the pulse of community desires throughout this planning process. As a result, this Plan embodies the community's resolve and commitment to create a comprehensive greenspace system that will preserve and enhance our special Bluegrass way of life.

#### **BACKGROUND – THE GREENSPACE STEERING COMMITTEE**

The Greenspace Steering Committee was formed in December, 1989, by Mayor Scotty Baesler to take the first steps in "formulating a plan whereby agriculture, development, and industry could co-exist harmoniously while preserving, maintaining and enhancing the special quality of life present in the Bluegrass." The specific charge to the Steering Committee was to review and refine a proposed ordinance that would establish a Greenspace Conservancy Commission and give it the responsibility to develop, implement and administer a "greenspace conservancy plan."

Community interest in this effort was so intense that over 120 people requested appointment to the Steering Committee. A committee of 42 was established with membership consisting of representatives from the homebuilders, realtors, horse industry, farmers, environmental groups, historic preservationists, landscape architects, land use planners, the Urban County government, and concerned citizens.

The Committee met in general session for six months, learning about efforts in other parts of the country and about the many and various techniques which can be used to protect valuable open space. Techniques studied included greenspace plans from other municipalities, conservation easements, transfer of development rights, cluster development, agricultural districts, and a series of other topics. From April through August, five subcommittees worked on specific parts of the proposed ordinance:

- The *Purpose and Definitions Subcommittee* developed the introductory parts of the proposed ordinance.
- The *Plan Elements Subcommittee* recommended the components to be included in the Greenspace Plan.



- The *Preservation Techniques Subcommittee* reviewed all known techniques for preserving and conserving open space, including farmland and historic landmarks.
- The *Commission Subcommittee* defined the make-up and the powers and duties of the Greenspace Commission.
- The *Funding Subcommittee* reviewed the various tax options open to local governments as well as tax incentives.

The final report of October 1990 included the draft ordinance and recommendations prepared by the subcommittees and approved by the Greenspace Steering Committee. This report was approved by Mayor Baesler and the Urban County Council in December of 1990. Ordinance 264-90 created the permanent Greenspace Commission.

## THE WORK OF THE GREENSPACE COMMISSION

**Membership and Structure of the Commission:** The Greenspace Commission is made up of representatives from the following groups:

- ▶ One member from the farm community
- ▶ One member from the horse industry
- ▶ One member from the business community
- ▶ One member a geologist, hydrologist or biologist
- ▶ One member a land use planner
- ▶ One member a landscape architect
- ▶ One member a builder or developer
- ▶ One member a realtor
- ▶ Two members representing conservation or environmental groups
- ▶ One member from the historic preservation community
- ▶ One member representing tourism interests
- ▶ One member from the Urban County Council
- ▶ Three members at large

The officers that guided the Commission during preparation of the Greenspace Plan were Don Todd as Chairman, Gloria Martin as Vice-Chairman, and Morgan McIlwain as Treasurer.

The ordinance mandated the Greenspace Commission to have a Greenspace Plan developed within two years. This plan would include goals and objectives, identification of Greenspace Plan components, and an action plan for management, acquisition, education, and funding. In order to accomplish this task, four subcommittees were created. The four subcommittees and their functions were:

- The **Greenspace Plan Development Subcommittee** developed the outline and determined the goals and objectives and information to be included in the Greenspace Plan. This subcommittee prepared the Greenspace Physical Plan (Section 1, Chapter IV) and coordinated other components of the Plan.

- The **Resource Inventory Review / Criteria Subcommittee** reviewed the resources for the Greenspace Plan, as listed in Section 1, Chapter IV, supervised preparation of maps documenting their location (Section 2, Chapter II), and drafted the criteria checklists for the greenspace prioritization process (Section 2, Chapter V).
- The **Management/Funding Subcommittee** was responsible for reviewing government regulations that affect greenspace, potential funding mechanisms for greenspace, and means of obtaining greenspace (Section 1, Chapter V).
- The **Regional Issues / Education Subcommittee** examined ways to educate the public about the importance of greenspace and about greenspace issues that pertain to the entire Bluegrass Region, related in Section 1, Chapter VI.

Members of the Greenspace Commission formed the core of each subcommittee, and professional individuals with special skills and interests related to greenspace were also invited to participate.

**Greenspace Commission Staff:** To assist the Greenspace Commission in developing the Greenspace Plan, consultants H. Powell & Co., Inc. and Beth K. Stewart were hired. The Greenspace Commission staff also included representatives from the following Urban County divisions and offices:

- ▶ Department of Housing and Community Development,  
Commissioner's Office
- ▶ Division of Historic Preservation
- ▶ Division of Planning
- ▶ Division of Parks and Recreation
- ▶ Department of Law
- ▶ Council Office

Staff from the Division of Engineering helped revise draft versions of the Greenspace Plan. In addition, staff from various regional and state agencies supported the Commission's work, including the Bluegrass Area Development District, Kentucky Heritage Council, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

**Plan Preparation and Adoption:** The first meeting of the Greenspace Commission was held on Tuesday January 7th, 1992. The Commission met monthly for most months, from January 1992 through February 1994, to develop the Plan. The Funding and Plan Subcommittees were the most active, often meeting as frequently as twice a month to prepare the plan proposals that would be presented to the Commission for its review. The final version of the Greenspace Plan was adopted by the Commission on \*\* for recommendation to the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission reviewed the plan at its meeting(s) of \*\*, and \*\*. The Greenspace Plan was considered by the Urban County Council on \*\*, and was adopted on \*\* as an element of the Comprehensive Plan.



## COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLAN

The Greenspace Commission itself was the focus of community involvement. The 64 people who served on the Commission and subcommittees during the Plan process were chosen because they represented diverse interests and had many contacts in the community, as well as for their expertise.

The Commission members also sought additional citizen involvement. The Commission sponsored a **survey** during the planning effort, to learn about the attitudes of Fayette County rural property owners about farming, development, and farmland preservation. This was a mail-back survey, sent to the approximately 1200 owners of rural property in the County. The Inventory Subcommittee wrote the survey and supervised its administration. Because it was a mail-back survey, all rural property owners had the opportunity to make their opinions known to the Commission. One-fourth of them (305) did. This is a phenomenal response rate for a mail-back survey, which shows the level of support for the greenspace process. There is a summary of interesting results below. The full results are in report form and are available through the Department of Housing and Community Development, Commissioner's Office.

When the first draft of the Plan was available, the Greenspace Commission also requested the staff and consultants to **meet with neighborhood, special interest and governmental groups** for their feedback. The Plan proposals were presented to the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee, the Lexington Convention and Tourism Bureau, the Bluegrass Area Development District, the Northside Neighborhood Association, the Woodward Heights Neighborhood Association, the Environmental Commission, and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Council. Their comments were incorporated in the final Plan.

## GREENSPACE VALUES AND SUPPORT FROM CITIZEN ATTITUDE SURVEYS

These survey summaries combine information about public attitudes concerning issues related to greenspace. The survey results guided the Commission in preparing the Greenspace Plan. More importantly, ***these surveys clearly demonstrate that the proposals of this plan have a solid foundation of community support.*** Taken together, these surveys indicate the types of natural and cultural resources that Lexington-Fayette County and other regional residents value as the Bluegrass identity. The survey results also tell us that people want these resources to be protected. The sources of information summarized below include:

### BLUEGRASS TOMORROW SURVEY

*MC2 for Bluegrass Tomorrow, May 1991*

This public attitude survey was commissioned by Bluegrass Tomorrow, a private non-profit organization, as a part of their effort to identify critical issues for the future of the Bluegrass and to encourage regional consensus on a future vision for growth and preservation. This was a random sample telephone survey with 2154 responses. The

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results are accurate within a  $\pm 5\%$  error rate for the entire region and for the individual counties of Fayette, Bourbon, Clark, Jessamine, Madison, Scott, and Woodford. The overall regional results were weighted by county population to reflect the actual distribution of population within the region. In essence, the Lexington-Fayette County results were weighted more heavily to reflect the predominance of regional population that resides there.

#### **FAYETTE COUNTY RURAL SURVEY**

*Lexington-Fayette Urban County Greenspace Commission, February 1993*

This was a mail-back public attitude survey conducted by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) for the Greenspace Commission. It was mailed to all 1200 owners of property outside the Urban Service Area in Fayette County. About one-fourth (305) of the surveys were answered. Although the mail-back survey is not a statistically valid representation of the opinions of all rural property owners, because it is a self-selected rather than random sample, it does represent those property owners who care about planning and its impact on their future.

The purpose of the survey was to identify the types of resources and uses on the respondent's property, their attitudes about the future of agriculture and their farm in particular, their desires and concerns about development, their interest in various resource preservation programs and opportunities, and the issues and needs they felt are important to the rural area.

#### **SPEAK OUT LEXINGTON**

*Roberts & Kay, Inc. for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, 1992*

This was a series of issue identification meetings sponsored by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government. At 156 public meetings held throughout the county participants were asked for their suggestions concerning how to improve the quality of life in their community. The "Speak Out Lexington" report lists the comments by Council district and summarizes the common themes in the comments. The series of public meetings identified greenspace as an issue of concern to Lexington-Fayette County residents, which was one impetus for the Greenspace Plan.

#### **VIEWS FROM THE ROAD**

*Trust for Public Land / Kentucky Heritage Council, February 1993*

This was a case study project in tandem with a similar project in the Red Hills region of southern Georgia/northern Florida, as a part of the Trust for Public Land's ongoing work to develop a method for identifying and protecting visually significant resources. The Trust for Public Land (TPL), a private, non-profit agency, is one of the most active and successful land-holding preservation organizations in the nation. "Views from the Road" builds on earlier work that identifies the common factors in a landscape that people tend to find visually attractive, and applied them to two Bluegrass road corridors that have been generally recognized as visually significant: Old Frankfort Pike and Pisgah Pike. With assistance from a regional steering committee, a survey was developed consisting

of a series of photographs characteristic of different types of landscapes and views along these roads. The survey was given to 150 regional residents, who were asked to rate the views in terms of their visual appeal. The summary survey report not only maps the most visually significant locations along the two roads. It also draws general conclusions about the types of Bluegrass landscape elements that are considered visually significant.

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## ***SURVEY SUMMARIES***

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### **BLUEGRASS TOMORROW SURVEY**

*MC2 for Bluegrass Tomorrow, May 1991*

#### ***Bluegrass Identity:***

When asked **what things make their community different or special**, community and neighborhood values were most important to 33% of the respondents; **open space and rural character was mentioned second**, by 18% of the respondents. There was little difference in the responses from residents of both rural and urban areas.

Most of the respondents (85%) **strongly identify with "the Bluegrass"** as the place where they live.

#### ***Development of Farmland:***

When read a list of issues and asked whether each was a problem or asset for the region, **"conversion of farmland" received the highest rating as a problem (63%)**, topping transportation (55%), housing costs, availability of jobs, and all other issues. **Two thirds of the respondents expect the problem of farmland conversion to get worse** within the next five years.

About three-fourths of the respondents believe that there should be either **less or no more conversion of agricultural land for development**. The responses were similar for residential development (41% no, 32% less) and industrial / commercial development (32% no, 37% less). This was one question that showed a significant difference in responses based on where people lived; rural / nonfarm residents and small town residents tended to be more tolerant of additional farmland conversion, but the majority still favored less or no more conversion.

When asked **how important agriculture is to the regional economy and to open space preservation**, respondents saw general agriculture as playing a stronger role in the economy, and horse farms as playing a stronger role in open space preservation:



	Crucial / Some Importance to Regional Economy	Crucial / Some Importance to Open Space Preserv.
General Agriculture	49 / 46%	52 / 44%
Horse Farms	51 / 37%	61 / 32%

In Fayette County, 69% believe that horse farms play a crucial role in preserving open space.

#### ***Regional Planning and Decision-making:***

The respondents **strongly supported regional planning and cooperation** on a range of topics. On each topic, follow-up questions asked whether a regional planning organization would help address this need, and whether the organization should have management powers and decision-making authority. Surprisingly, there was **majority support for a regional decision-making authority on open space / farmland preservation**. The percentages below are those answering "yes" (given as all responses / Fayette responses).

Topic	Regional Cooperation	Regional Agency	Regional Authority
Open Space & Farm Preservation	76 / 80%	70 / 75%	51 / 54%

#### ***Greenspace Protection Measures:***

Bluegrass and Fayette residents **strongly support a purchase of development rights (PDR) program** for farmland threatened by development, and **are willing to support a tax increase** to pay for it. Although horse farms are seen as more critical to open space preservation, there was a more positive response to purchase of general agricultural land (79 / 82%) than horse farms (63 / 66%). Two-thirds of respondents (67 / 71%) were willing to pay an additional \$5 a year in taxes to fund a PDR program for general agriculture, and a majority (50 / 55%) were willing to go as high as \$10 a year. For horse farms, a majority (54 / 59%) were willing to pay an additional \$5 per year.

#### **FAYETTE RURAL SURVEY**

Lexington-Fayette Urban County Greenspace Commission, February 1993

#### ***Who Responded to the Survey?***

**Farm size:** A majority (58.7%) of the survey respondents own a farm of 25 acres or less.

This should be kept in mind when interpreting the results. One-fifth (20.7%) own land larger than 100 acres, and 17.8% own land between 26 and 100 acres.

**Products:** 44.9% of the respondents have horses on their land; 31.1% have other livestock; 76.3% raise tobacco.

Almost 2/3 of the respondents (61.3%) **farm the property themselves or within the family.**

### ***Farm Income and the Future of Farming***

Only 42% of respondents feel that their **farm is large enough to carry on a profitable farming operation.**

Farming was the **primary source of income** for only 14.8% of respondents. (This question should be cross-tabulated to remove the influence of the "minifarms.")

Only 48.5% of respondents **expect their property to be farmed in the future.** "Not enough income" (25.2%) and "More suitable for development / Can get a better price if sold" (19.7%) were the top reasons given. "Too much development around farm" (9.2%) was the third most common problem.

### ***Problems for Farmers***

**Illegal dumps** (47.5%), **roadside dumping** (47.2%), and **urban encroachment** (46.6%) were the three **most significant issues for rural Fayette County** cited by the respondents. Other environmental issues related to greenspace were stream/surface water quality (27.9%) and storm drainage/flooding (14.8%).

The need to **diversify farm products** (34.8%) and for liability insurance (22.3%) were the **farm concerns** uppermost in the minds of the survey respondents.

**Many Fayette County farmers want to actively work towards solving these problems.** One fifth of the respondents (21.6%) were willing to volunteer someone from their farm to serve on committees to resolve them.

### ***Bluegrass and Rural Identity***

Three-fourths of the respondents (76.1%) think that **Fayette County's rural character is unique**, compared to other areas around the United States.

The 305 survey respondents reported the presence of **303 historic structures on their land.** Considering the large proportion of agricultural estates or "minifarms" among the respondents, this probably averages to more than one historic structure per farm.



### ***Support for Farmland Preservation***

Three-fourths of the respondents (75.4%) believe that **Fayette County farmland should be preserved for future generations**. Seventy percent (70.5%) would choose to preserve their land if farming income were as profitable as development of the land.

Only 13.1% feel that current farmland protections are adequate. The majority (54.8%) feel that **greater protection is needed for Fayette County farmland**. Only 4.3% want to see more development of farmland; almost one-third (30.8%) want to see less development.

One-fifth (20%) of the respondents **would be interested in a conservation easement on their property**. This is an extremely favorable response. Almost half of the respondents (43.9%) are unsure or need more information to make a decision. Only one-fourth (23.6%) rejected the idea outright. One fourth to one third would like to learn about various other preservation techniques.

### ***Land Use Policies and Urban Encroachment in the Rural Area***

Most respondents feel that the **minimum lot size** should either remain at 10 acres (37.4%) or should vary by farmland quality (31.8%). Only 5% would like to see the minimum lot size reduced.

The majority of respondents (56.4%) **disapprove of future development in the vicinity of their property**. However, one-fifth (21.0%) approve. (The influence of the small "minifarm" owners may affect this response).

Single family homes on large lots (30.2%) are seen as **causing the least impact on adjacent farming operations**. Most respondents feel that apartments (12.8%), shopping centers (14.4%), or business/commercial uses in general (10.5%) would have **the worst impact on their farming operation**.

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### **SPEAK OUT LEXINGTON**

*Roberts & Kay, Inc. for the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government, 1992*

**"Improve greenspace"** was among the ten most frequently repeated suggestions for improving the quality of life in Lexington-Fayette County. Suggestions related to greenspace were mentioned by 51 of the 156 discussion groups; *improve education* was the only other issue mentioned by as many groups.

**More / better parks and recreation** were also among the ten needs most frequently mentioned.

The **most common suggestions** concerned the following issues related to greenspace:

- ▶ The need for **bike paths and bikeways** seemed to be the most frequent suggestion, one that was made in almost all Council districts.
- ▶ The need for **street trees and tree plantings** in new development and to protect existing street trees.
- ▶ The need for more accessible **recreation areas in old and new neighborhoods**; multi-use of school grounds was mentioned several times.
- ▶ The connection between **controlled expansion** of the city through judicious use of the Urban Service Boundary and the need to **more intensively revitalize** the area within New Circle Road, especially Downtown.
- ▶ **Protection of horse farms**; incentives such as easements, public purchase, tax relief were mentioned.
- ▶ The need for **pedestrian connections** between open spaces, neighborhoods, and Downtown.

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## VIEWS FROM THE ROAD

The significance of the "Views from the Road" study is that it is the only source of survey information about the **specific elements of the rural landscape that regional residents place a value upon**. By asking people to rank the photographs according to visual preference, the photographic survey also captured their preferences about reoccurring features in the photographs, such as rock fences.

There were a total of 31 photographs that people rated in the survey. These were divided into high, medium and low visual preference based on the averaged scores for each photo. Because the scores were averaged, those in the "medium" category may be photos that some people liked very much and others disliked, for a moderate average score. However, the "high" and "low" categories include photos that the survey respondents generally agreed upon. These photos represent **a consensus of opinion about which features of the landscape are appreciated or disliked by regional residents**.

However, the **limitations of this survey** are important to keep in mind – chiefly, that the photos only represented one type of Bluegrass landscape fully, the horse farm landscape (see discussion of "Landscape Types," Section 1, Chapter II). There were also some photos of general agricultural scenes, rural large lot subdivisions, and traditional rural settlements, but none of the Kentucky River landscape.

With these caveats in mind, of the 31 total photos, the 13 "high" ranked photos that were **most preferred** by the survey respondents had these common features:

- ▶ The 3 photos with the highest average scores all were of **narrow roads lined with a canopy of mature trees and with rock or plank fences**. In all, there were 4 preferred photos of tree-lined roads.
- ▶ Seven (7) of the 13 photos had **plank fences, fields and fence rows of trees**. Of these, 5 were recognizable **horse farms**.



- ▶ **Rock fences** were prominent in 5 of the 13 photos.
- ▶ **Woodland savannah** was the only feature in two of the preferred photos.
- ▶ Two (2) of the preferred photos featured **historic buildings** – one a church and the other a house with a historic marker in a traditional rural settlement.

The 5 photographs that were **least preferred** included 3 shots of **piano-key residential development** (road frontage lined with residential estate-type tract housing), 1 photo of **deteriorated spot commercial use**, and 1 photo of an **open road through fields with no trees**.

## II. INVENTORY OF GREENSPACE RESOURCES

### INFORMATION INCLUDED IN THE GREENSPACE INVENTORY MAPS

This chapter is a guide to the inventory maps that were prepared by the Division of Planning staff as a part of the background studies for the Greenspace Plan. The types of natural and cultural resources that were inventoried and mapped as background information for the Plan are listed in Section 1, Chapter IV. The source and date of this information is available from the Planning Division.

### INFORMATION NOT INCLUDED IN THE INVENTORY MAPS

It is important to recognize that there were some limitations to the inventory information. Because of the short time frame for the planning process, only resource information already available was collected and evaluated for the Greenspace Plan. The only new study undertaken for the plan was the Rural Survey (Chapter I). In addition, the inventory and mapping covers Fayette County only, including both the Urban Service Area and the Rural Service Area.

Although some types of resources may be considered significant to the greenspace system, up-to-date, thorough, objective inventories of these resources were not available, and the Greenspace Plan could not consider the information. To complete the Urban and Rural Greenspace Plans, it will be important to inventory and fully assess the greenspace potential of the following:

- ▶ *Tree-lined roads.* Although roads lined by mature trees are considered to be very significant to the Bluegrass landscape (see "Views From The Road" survey, Section 2, Chapter I), the inventory maps show major tree stands but do not designate tree-lined roads. This information is available, but it is so detailed that it could not be included in the scope of the mapping.
- ▶ *Plank fences / paddocks / rolling topography.* Although the resource inventory did include properties classified as horse farms, it did not single out those parts of the properties with these signature features of horse farms.
- ▶ *Wetlands:* Wetlands have been identified in current federal legislation as highly significant natural resources that should be protected. However, there has not been a comprehensive survey to identify wetlands in Lexington-Fayette County. The 1988 Comprehensive Plan identifies two wetland sites in the list of Significant Botanical Areas; one of these, Proctor's Bald Cypress Pond, is located within the Urban Service Area and was identified as a significant resource concentration for greenspace planning. The Significant Botanical Areas located in the Rural Service Area were included in the identification of resource concentrations (Section 1, Chapter IV).

The Greenspace Plan, in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan land use



policies, should provide a structure to coordinate efforts to comply with current and future federal laws concerning wetlands. For instance, the LFUCG Engineering Division's design for flood control projects could affect wetlands. In addition, the Comprehensive Plan should add wetlands to the list and map of environmentally sensitive lands. Wetlands must be defined and identified by delineators certified by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government should make every effort to locate and preserve such ecosystems.

- ▶ *Scenic roads and views.* The Commission reviewed the available scenic information, primarily that contained in the Corridors Enhancement Study, and did not include this in the inventory because it was a study performed by a single staff person. The Commission felt that scenic quality is a subjective matter, and different people have different opinions about it. Although there are methods for inventorying scenic resources based on a consensus of residents' opinions about valued scenes and views, these have not been applied countywide. The "Views From the Road" method (see Section 2, Chapter I) is a model for reliable scenic resource evaluation, but this project only encompassed a small area of the county.
- ▶ *All historic resources.* Historic buildings have only been inventoried fully in some areas of the county and city.
- ▶ *Small-scale and historic features,* such as rock-walled springs and spring houses, bridge abutments, entry gates, barns, etc. Most of these have not been inventoried.
- ▶ *Private properties,* such as estates, churchyards, and office parks, can play an important role in contributing to greenspace for the surrounding neighborhood.
- ▶ *Many government-owned properties* could be preserved or enhanced as urban greenspace, such as utility properties, college campuses, V.A. hospitals, sewage treatment plants, public housing developments, and the outdoor spaces of landmark buildings such as the Courthouse.
- *Drainage facilities.* Existing and proposed locations for major detention basins that are needed to reduce flooding in developed / developing areas, as well as the stream access points that will be needed for water quality and floodplain management to meet future National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements, provide opportunities for greenspace.

These resources should be inventoried, and their current or possible contribution to the greenspace system should be determined. For the private properties, strategies should be identified that can encourage their owners to preserve and maintain them for their greenspace values. For the public properties, joint-use opportunities for greenspace, visual enhancement, and public recreation should be examined and strategies pursued to accomplish this.

**Ways to Consider These Resources in Future Greenspace Actions:** The Greenspace Plan is likely to be implemented property by property. As sites are evaluated for greenspace protections, either during the development review process or as the property is considered for acquisition or an easement, the cultural and natural resources can be inventoried for that property and its surrounding area. The criteria for determining greenspace priorities (Section 1, Chapter V) list many types of resources that could not be included in the greenspace inventory. These criteria should be used in an evaluation of the need to revise development review ordinances, to ensure that all resources significant to greenspace will be evaluated and considered for protection.

In the long term, it is important to pursue comprehensive assessment of features that are significant for greenspace. For instance, it is difficult to judge what buildings and sites have historic significance without understanding the overall historic context of the county. The historic context study and intensive historic surveys that will be the foundation for the Long Range Historic Preservation Plan should be completed. It is also proposed that community groups and the LFUCG apply the "Views From the Road" method to other areas, to eventually build a complete, countywide scenic inventory. The photographic survey should be repeated for other landscape types such as diversified agriculture, the Kentucky River landscape, and historic rural settlements. The method should be adapted to inventory scenic urban areas also.

## INVENTORY MAPS

The inventory information was combined on two sets of maps, one set for the rural service area and another for the urban service area. Essentially the same resource information was mapped for both the rural and urban area. The planning sector maps prepared by the Division of Planning served as the original base for the maps. The urban resources were mapped at a scale of 1 inch = 600 feet. The rural area resources were mapped at a scale of 1 inch = 2000 feet.

Because of the complex layers of information mapped for the rural area, the LFUCG requested preparation of computer-generated maps, which were digitized and printed by the Bluegrass Area Development District (Bluegrass ADD). These maps were digitized using a Macintosh based graphics package, which allows review and printing of the information in separate layers and at different scales. However, this is not a geographic information system (GIS). It is the intent of the LFUCG to convert the rural and urban inventory maps to a GIS format in the future as funds are available.

A GIS system links information, in the form of a computerized data base, with mapped locations. For instance, with a GIS system one could pinpoint a location on the inventory map and use the computer to call up a variety of detailed information about it, such as historic survey information, property ownership, zoning, development history and pending proposals, significant flora and fauna known to be present, etc. A GIS system would greatly aid in the decision-making process for prioritization and implementation of proposed greenspace properties.

The urban and rural greenspace inventory maps are housed at the Office of the



Commissioner of Housing and Community Development and are available for review by the public at that location. These maps were used as the basis for the resource, linkage and site evaluations (Section 2, Chapter III) and for development of the Greenspace Physical Plan (Section 1, Chapter IV). The maps were displayed during many greenspace meetings and public hearings on the Greenspace Plan.

The Division of Planning has more detailed maps of much of the inventory information, which were used as the basis for the greenspace inventory maps prepared by the Bluegrass ADD. For instance, Planning houses a Rural Land Use computer data base, accompanied by maps of the rural area at 1 inch = 400 feet and 1 inch = 2000 feet scale, that offer greater detail on rural land uses and roadways than the Bluegrass ADD maps can provide.

### III. PLANNING PROCESS FOR THE GREENSPACE PHYSICAL PLAN

This section of the Greenspace Plan describes the method for starting with the Greenspace Goals and Objectives and the inventory of greenspace resources and developing the Physical Greenspace Plan from them. These planning process notes accompany the Physical Greenspace Plan concepts and maps in Section 1, Chapter IV. This chapter relates the steps in the planning process for arriving at the Physical Plan.

The planning process evaluated three basic components of the greenspace system: **resources, sites, and linkages** (see definitions in Section 1, Chapter IV). The methods and conclusions for evaluating resources, sites and linkages for the urban and rural area were different, reflecting the essential differences between property ownership and use, development potential of vacant and nonurban lands, and the amount and density of remaining Bluegrass resources in the urban and rural area.

Because the great majority of rural lands with significant Bluegrass resources will always remain in private ownership, resource evaluation for greenspace protection was most important for the rural area. Because of the intensity of uses and the fact that there are few remaining Bluegrass resources in the urban area, acquisition and protection of specific greenspace sites and the creation of greenspace system linkages was most significant there.

#### EVALUATION OF RURAL GREENSPACE RESOURCES, SITES, AND LINKAGES

##### *Identifying Significant Rural Greenspace Resources*

Greenspace resources that evoke the Bluegrass identity abound in the rural landscape, and one of the greatest challenges of this plan was to select the rural resources and areas that are most in need of protection. The types of resources that were inventoried, mapped and evaluated for the rural area are listed in Section 1, Chapter IV. Significant locations of natural and cultural rural resources, called "resource concentrations," were identified by **combining two evaluation methods**:

**Density of Resources:** This method gave equal weight to each category of inventoried resource, and identified locations where three or more resources were in close proximity, regardless of the category of resource or the landscape type. For example, steep slopes, water and tree stands in proximity were identified as a resource concentration. In practice this method gives greater attention to natural resources because the resource inventory mapped a greater number of natural resource factors than cultural resource factors.

**Landscape types:** This method used the Bluegrass Landscape Types (see Section 1, Chapter II) and perceptions about features that are valued as part of the Bluegrass identity as the basis for evaluating the significance of resources. The resources that are considered to be important to each landscape type were given a weighted value. Those resources that the Commission felt were most characteristic to each landscape type were



given the highest values. These weighted values were added together for resources located in close proximity, and areas of higher overall score were identified as significant resource concentrations.

For example, rock fences were considered by the Greenspace Commission to be one of the most characteristic features of the Horse Farm Landscape. A rock fence alone, or a historic resource in combination with a tree stand, had a high enough score to qualify as significant locations of resources for that landscape type. In effect this method gives greater attention to cultural resources, because features such as rock fences and historic sites tended to be high on the list as significant to all of the various landscape types.

**The two evaluation methods were combined** in one map to identify significant rural resource concentrations. Combining the two methods balanced any preferences towards cultural or natural factors in each method and gave equal consideration to both.

**The limitations to this method** should be recognized. Chiefly, there are resources considered significant to the landscape types that could not be included in the inventory of current information or in the analysis. These include, for instance, scenic views, tree-lined roads, and qualities of streams such as deep pools, waterfalls, or palisades (not inventoried) and springs (not distinguished from other geologic hazard areas in the inventory). As the Greenspace Plan is implemented, the map of significant rural resource concentrations can be refined when scenic studies are done or specific properties are evaluated for easements and acquisition.

### ***Identifying Rural Greenspace Sites / Public Access Needs***

This evaluation was based on the concept that the public needs additional access opportunities to enjoy the special qualities of the rural area. The location, size, landscape qualities, and use of existing public and semi-public properties were considered. **General geographic areas needing new major public access opportunities** were identified in several steps:

- **First, geographic areas that are the best examples of the Bluegrass identity yet do not have public access** were identified. In general, these are the **northeast area (North Elkhorn vicinity, Russell Cave to Bryan Station), Boone Creek area, Kentucky River palisades area, and the southwest area (South Elkhorn vicinity).**
- **Existing park properties were evaluated** by level of use and the quality of the resources they contain, with a goal that high quality examples of all Bluegrass landscape types should be accessible for public enjoyment. For example, Masterson Station Park is in a strategic location, but does not contain much in the way of significant rural resources. Raven's Run Nature Sanctuary is within a significant area and represents the Kentucky River valley landscape. However, Raven's Run is heavily used, and it has only a very small area of river palisades. This added the **need for increased public access to the western area (Old Frankfort Pike vicinity) and the palisades area.**

- More specific areas that should be the **focus of increased public access** were selected by outlining the **rural resource concentrations of the highest value** that are located within the geographic areas and landscape types identified above.

### *Identifying Potential Rural Linkages and Corridors*

Potential linkages and corridors considered for the rural physical greenspace plan included the following:

- Locations at the urban edge that had been identified as **urban-to-rural connections**, such as potential safe crossing points under or over I-75. These would be potential connections between the major greenspace system corridors within the urban area and those in the rural area.
- **Bluegrass Wheelman bicycle routes**. These are routes that are identified by the main bicycling club of the Bluegrass region as being the most attractive rural bicycling routes.
- **Roads located within and near significant rural resource concentrations**, as identified in the first step of the rural plan, the resource analysis (above).
- **Off-road linkages** were considered only where they traverse public or semi-public property, or where agricultural activities could be buffered from recreational activities in the corridor. These included: **abandoned railroad rights-of-way** with rails-to-trails potential and **greenways** along creeks extending from the urban area.

## EVALUATION OF URBAN GREENSPACE RESOURCES, SITES, & LINKAGES

### *Identifying Significant Urban Greenspace Resources*

The Greenspace Plan identified those urban natural and cultural resources, as listed in the Inventory (Section 1, Chapter IV), that should be enhanced in developed areas, retained in developing areas, and made accessible through the greenspace system. Because of the intensity of development in the urban area, remaining Bluegrass resources are few and scattered widely. All resources were carefully located on the urban sector maps. Locations where two or more resources occur in close proximity, such as a stream and steep slope, or a historic building and wooded area, were identified as having greenspace potential.

### *Identifying Urban Greenspace Sites / Public Access Needs*

Opportunities for urban greenspace sites were initially identified on a 1" = 2,000' scale map showing all properties within the Urban Service Area (USA) of 10 acres or more in size that have not been developed to their urban potential. These properties, which are called "nonurban" properties for the purposes of this report, include vacant lands, horse farms, estates, and uses such as plant nurseries. All nonurban properties with resource



concentrations, as designated on each urban sector map, or that are located within or adjacent to the linkage system shown on the Greenspace Physical Plan (Chapter V), were identified as having potential as greenspace sites. Altogether, 66 sites were identified. Through a series of map overlays, the following characteristics were catalogued for each potential greenspace site:

- The presence of a **resource concentration**.
- Whether it is near the location of a **proposed park**, as shown on the 1988 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
- Whether it is in an area with an identified **park need**. The analysis of park need showed all residential areas that are not within a 1/2 mile radius service area of an existing park. (The 1/2 mile radius represents walking distance to a park. ) The park service areas were not extended across edges to neighborhoods, such as railroads or major streets, in recognition that these can be barriers to safe access to parks by foot or bicycle.
- Whether it is a **greenway** as shown on the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, or a **priority greenway** as identified by the Division of Planning staff – those with substantial remaining natural value and potential for recreational trails.
- Whether it is within or adjacent to the proposed Greenspace **trail system**, as shown on the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan.

Although it was not possible to visit all 66 potential sites in the field to verify this information, 18 sites distributed throughout the city were drawn on maps of 1" = 600' scale and were field-checked. The list of sites with greenspace potential is in Appendix C. It should be noted that, as additional inventory information is available about greenspace resources and opportunities, sites may be added to this list. The list of sites identified as having potential for public access as a part of the greenspace system will be further evaluated by the prioritization process recommended in Section 1, Chapter V. At that time, decisions will be made as to which sites should be investigated for acquisition or other protection measures.

**Next Steps:** The evaluation of urban sites with greenspace potential was subject to the same limitations as the resource inventory, as discussed in Section 2, Chapter II – namely, that some types of resources and opportunities had not been inventoried, and this information was not available. To complete the Urban Greenspace Plan, it will be important to fully assess the greenspace potential of three other types of properties with greenspace potential: private properties, government-owned properties; and existing and proposed locations for major detention basins.

### ***Identifying Potential Urban Linkages and Corridors***

A key part of the greenspace urban concept is to create a network of corridors, trails, and open spaces throughout the city, for purposes of **visual, recreational/commuting, and**

**environmental linkage.** There were three steps to drawing the urban linkage system, shown on overlays. The first step was to answer the question, **what would the system link?** Like a street system, the greenspace system was envisioned as tying together major open spaces and all of the activities and destinations of daily life – parks, schools, libraries, commercial and entertainment areas, employment areas, and residential neighborhoods. An overlay was drawn, based on the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, with **open spaces and urban activity centers and attractions** located on it.

The second step was to identify **greenspace "districts."** Just as with planning for streets, it was helpful to divide the City into districts, or neighborhoods, for greenspace sites and linkages, especially for non-auto travel within a neighborhood and between neighborhoods.

- **Edges:** The edges to these districts are features that can only be safely crossed at certain points. Edges include:
  - ▶ *Limited access roads, elevated roads, and railroads*
  - ▶ *Areas of incompatible land uses – e.g. heavy industrial uses, such as along Town Branch from Versailles Road to Leestown, and along Palumbo*
  - ▶ *Roads with a high traffic volume, such as Broadway and Tates Creek, that are difficult for recreational users and young cyclists to cross*
- **Safe crossing points:** To create an interconnected greenspace system, especially for bicycle and pedestrian travel, locations were identified where edges can be safely bridged by the greenspace system, such as:
  - ▶ *Bridges, underpasses, farm tunnels, and drainage culverts with existing sidewalks or sufficient height and width for pedestrian/bicycle paths.*
  - ▶ *Opportunities at railroads for creating parallel paths along the railroad edge and for crossing over/under limited access roads such as New Circle and I-75. Because of the safety concerns attending use of lands adjacent to railroads for trails, this was not pursued. However, if any railroads are abandoned in the future, the right-of-way should be immediately secured for greenspace.*
- **Cross-town routes between districts:** Cross-town travel (concentric circles within New Circle Road), which is significant for the greenspace system, is not well-developed in the street pattern. However, drainage patterns provide opportunities for cross-town routes perpendicular to the "spokes" of the major street system. To help break the habit of looking at the city as the existing street pattern, the watershed boundaries and major drainages of North and South Elkhorn Creeks and East and West Hickman Creeks were reviewed for greenspace linkage potential.

The third step was to **map and review all linear features** that were listed in the inventory as having greenspace potential, to identify those that could create connections between urban activity centers and attractions and major open spaces, both within and between



neighborhoods. The list of opportunities for linkages that were considered included:

#### **Off-Street Linkage Opportunities:**

- *Greenways* – The Division of Planning staff selected those greenways, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map, with substantial remaining natural qualities, that is, unchannelized streams and minor drainages with trees. Greenways included in the greenspace system were those that appear to have potential for recreational trails.
- *Abandoned railroad rights-of-way* and rail lines now in use that may be abandoned in the future. (No rail line currently in use was included as a part of the greenspace system.)
- *Abandoned rural road rights-of-way and remnants of rural roads* that will no longer be used by automobiles. Rural road remnants are those narrow roads bypassed by widening or realignment that still have rural character, such as Squires Road.
- *Major parks and public / semi-public open spaces* that could have trails through them.

#### **On-Street Linkage Opportunities:**

- *Arterial roads and interstates* that have potential for corridor enhancement and those with Corridor Plans prepared by the Corridors Committee.
- *On-street bikeways*, existing and proposed. There are three types of on-street bikeways in the Bicycle Facilities Plan:
  - ▶ Road widened for separate bike lane, striped and signed
  - ▶ Separate bike lane within existing road width, striped and signed
  - ▶ No separate bike lane, signed only
- *Roads* designated in the Transportation Plan for *extension, realignment, widening or new construction* that have potential for bikeways, corridor improvements, landscaping, and preservation of parallel streams for a parkway effect.
- *Remnants of rural roads* that would remain in use by automobiles.

#### **Field Checking**

Linkage opportunities were field verified in much of the urban area by staff and Plan Subcommittee members. Field visits were helpful for: identifying sites smaller than 10 acres, the minimum size shown on the nonurban / vacant properties map; finding areas of natural vegetation along streams; and finding safe crossings for major roads and railroads. For instance, the entire stretch of the proposed South Elkhorn-Higbee Mill-

Squires Road-Hickman Creek corridor, as shown on the Physical Plan, was field-checked. Field visits found that there is a drainage culvert large enough to traverse under the Southern Railroad tracks and serve as a potential link between Fayette Mall, Shillito Park and the Reynolds Tobacco Plant property. Field work also located a farm tunnel beneath Nicholasville Road just south of Waveland State Park .

Field checking was sufficient to demonstrate that the design concepts for the physical greenspace system are feasible. However, the Physical Plan in most areas is not property-specific. As the greenspace system is fleshed out for each area, further field work will be needed to identify the properties with the best greenspace potential.



## APPENDIX A. GREENSPACE DEFINITIONS

### PURPOSE

This appendix defines words, terms, and phrases contained within the Greenspace Plan. In the interpretation of the Greenspace Plan, the provisions and rules of this section shall be observed and applied, except when the context clearly requires otherwise:

1. Words used or defined in one tense or form shall include other tenses and derivative forms.
2. Words in the singular number shall include the plural number, and words in the plural number shall include the singular number.
3. The masculine gender shall include the feminine, and the feminine gender shall include the masculine.
4. The word "shall" is mandatory.
5. The word "may" is permissive.
6. In case of any difference of meaning or implication between the text of this plan and any caption, illustration, or table, the text shall control.

### DEFINITIONS

**Access:** The ability of the general public to gain entry to a parcel of land for a specific use. These are in general three different techniques to provide the public with access: 1) hold title to a parcel of land, 2) purchase the right of public access, 3) negotiate the right of public access, using easements or other techniques.

**Adaptive Reuse:** The process by which structurally sound older buildings are developed for economically viable new uses. Such buildings may be historically important, architecturally distinctive, or simply underutilized structures.

**Agricultural District:** Kentucky House Bill 744, "The Agricultural District and Conservation Act" became law in 1982. Kentucky's Agricultural District Program provides for the voluntary creation of agricultural districts by a single landowner or group of landowners or group of landowners of at least 250 contiguous acres of land which is in agricultural use. This program is administered at the local level by Kentucky's 121 Conservation Districts and at the state level by the Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission. Once an agricultural district is certified, the land in a district cannot be annexed by a city or municipality, state agencies must encourage the creation of and mitigate their impacts on the conversion of farmland in these agricultural districts, and landowners who receive a summons of condemnation on land in a district can request a public hearing be held by the local conservation district.

**Agricultural Land:** Agricultural lands are lands currently used to produce agricultural commodities including forest products, or lands that have the potential for such production. These lands have a favorable combination of soil quality, growing season,

moisture supply, size, and accessibility. This definition includes land that has no potential for cultivated crop use but is now in agricultural use including range, pasture, or forest-land.

**Agricultural Use:** The use of a tract of land of at least five (5) contiguous acres for the production of agricultural or horticultural crops, including but not limited to livestock, livestock products, poultry, poultry products, grain, hay, pastures, soybeans, tobacco, timber, orchard fruits, vegetables, flowers or ornamental plants, including provision for dwellings for persons and their families who are engaged in the above agricultural use on the tract but not including residential building development for sale or lease to the public.

**Agricultural soils, prime:** See Prime Farmland.

**Agricultural Zoning:** A legally binding designation of the uses to which land may be put, including the type, amount and location of development. Agricultural zoning restricts uses to agriculture and related uses. Often a large minimum lot size is stipulated in an agricultural zone (Fayette County has a minimum of a 10 acre building site outside the urban service area).

**Aquifer:** A water-bearing layer of permeable rock, sand or gravel.

**Aquifer Recharge Area:** An area that has soils and geological features that are conducive to allowing significant amounts of surface water to percolate into groundwater, and where additions are made to an aquifer by infiltration of water through the land surface.

**Bicycle Facilities:** A general term denoting improvements and provisions made by public agencies to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including parking facilities, signage, bicycle storage racks, bike lanes and paths, etc.

**Bicycle Lane (Bike lane):** A portion of a roadway which has been designated by striping, signing and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

**Bicycle Path (Bike Path):** A bikeway physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier and either within the highway right-of-way or within an independent right-of-way.

**Bicycle Route (Bike Route):** A segment of a system of bikeways designated by the jurisdiction having authority with appropriate directional and informational markers, with or without a specific bicycle route number.

**Bikeway:** Any road, path, or any way which in some manner is specifically designated as open to bicycle travel, regardless of whether such facilities are designated for the exclusive use of bicycles or are to be shared with other transportation modes.

Class I - a bikeway completely separated from vehicular traffic and within an independent right-of-way or the right-of-way of another facility. In this report,



travelways separated from vehicles but shared by bicycles and pedestrians are included in this classification.

**Class II** - Any bikeway which is part of the roadway or shoulder and delineated by pavement marking or barriers such as extruded curb or parking bumper blocks. Vehicle parking, crossing or turning movements may be permitted within the bikeway.

**Class III** - Any bikeway sharing its traffic right-of-way with motor vehicles and is designated by signing only.

**Buffer:** A landscape treatment, a particular use of land or a structure to separate and/or screen one use from another, to provide a transition from one use to another, or to inhibit the view, noise, lights or other public nuisances. (see screening)

**Cluster Development:** A development design technique that concentrates buildings in specific areas on a site to allow the remaining land to be used for recreation, common open space, agriculture, and preservation of environmentally sensitive areas. See also Rural Cluster Development, Appendix E.

**Collector Greenspace Route / Street:** See Greenspace Linkages / Street.

**Comprehensive Plan:** The Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for public and private actions and decisions to assure the development of public and private property in the most appropriate relationships. Specifically refers to the Lexington-Fayette County Comprehensive Plan. See also Small Area Plan.

**Canopy Tree:** A tree which at maturity creates a roof like layer of spreading branches. Generally any tree variety expected to reach a height in excess of thirty (30) feet at maturity (such as oaks, pines, sycamores, some maples, etc.) Richmond Road near downtown and Old Frankfort Road are two examples of roads with canopy trees.

**Context:** The setting in which a historic element, site, structure, street or district exists.

**Conservation:** Protection and care that prevent destruction or deterioration of historical or otherwise significant structures, buildings, or natural resources. To manage in a manner which avoids wasteful or destructive uses and provides for future availability.

**Conservation Easement:** A nonpossessory interest of a holder in real property imposing limitations or affirmative obligations, the purposes of which include retaining or protecting natural, scenic, or open-space values of real property, assuring its availability for agricultural, forest, recreational, open-space use, protecting natural resources, maintaining or enhancing air or water quality, or preserving the historical, architectural, archaeological, or cultural aspects of real property. Conservation easements may be held by a governmental body or a charitable organization whose purposes include retaining or protecting the natural, scenic, or open-space values of real property. KRS 382.800

**Corridor:** The land area associated with a linear feature such as a stream or road. The extent of the associated land area may be defined differently for each corridor based on the planning purposes. "Stream corridor" often refers to the riparian vegetation zone, floodplain, and steep banks associated with a stream. "Road corridor" may include abutting land uses as well as the natural and cultural resources within and adjacent to the road right of way. Corridors may also include all lands and resources within the viewshed of the linear feature, or nearby properties that could impact the use or value of the feature. When applied to roads, the term "corridors" also refers to the areas of concern to the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Corridors Committee.

**Corridor Overlay Zone:** A corridor overlay zone is a zoning technique intended to provide for and promote orderly growth along major routes of the city designated as being of distinctive scenic, cultural, and/or historical importance, while protecting, preserving and enhancing the unique attributes of such areas as a valuable resource of the community. See also Greenspace Overlay Zone for definition of overlay zoning.

**Cultural Resource:** For the purposes of this Plan, this refers to resources created by human activities. Rural cultural resources convey the Bluegrass identity that has been created over time by human management, alteration of the natural landscape, and construction of buildings needed for farming and community life from the materials at hand. Rural cultural resources are a visible reminder of Bluegrass agricultural traditions. Urban cultural resources convey Lexington's cultural identity. They are the features that are a visible reminder of the city's development patterns and economic and social influences.

**Design Control or Design Guidelines:** Public regulation of the design of private buildings and sites to develop, preserve or enhance the attractiveness or character of a particular area or individual buildings.

**Design Standards:** Development objectives relating to considerations such as site organization, landscaping, architecture and site details of projects under review.

**Density:** The average number of families, persons or housing units per acre of land.

**Drainage area:** The area of land between drainage divides that drains into the same body of water.

**Drainage basin:** A part of the surface of the earth that is occupied by a drainage system, which consists of a surface stream or a body of impounded surface water together with all tributary surface streams and bodies of impounded surface water and their drainage areas.

**Easement:** A legal document which sets forth restrictions on the use of the property which is usually privately owned. These easements can be given to the local government (or non-profit conservation organization) enabling the property owner to acquire a tax benefit based on the difference of the value of the land or building before the easement and value after the easement. Easements are given in perpetuity and may



be given based on the scenic, natural or historic value of the land, or may be given on a particular building (facade easement) based on its historic and/or architectural significance. Easements may be purchased similar to purchasing any other interest in land.

**Easement, Conservation:** See Conservation Easement.

**Environmentally Sensitive Area:** As defined for purposes of development in Lexington and Fayette County, this term applies to any area which due to its natural or physical setting may have environmental problems with regard to development or use. Areas included are (but are not limited to) areas of steep slope (over 15%), floodplains, sinkholes, areas of poor soil, improper fills, wetlands, significant tree stands, aquifer recharge areas, and similar areas. From Lexington-Fayette Urban County Subdivision Regulations, section 1-11.

**Facade:** The exterior wall of a building exposed to public view, or that wall viewed by persons not within the building.

**Farmland:** Land used for the cultivation of agricultural products and/or land used for the breeding and raising of domestic animals.

**Farmsteads:** Land for dwellings, buildings, barns, pens, corrals, farmstead windbreaks, family gardens, and other uses connected with operating farms.

**Flood:** A temporary rise in stream flow or stage that results in water overtopping its bank and inundating areas adjacent to the channel.

**Floodway:** The channel of a stream and those portions of the floodplain adjoining the channel that are required to carry and discharge the flood water or flood flows of any river or stream including but not limited to flood flows associated with the regulatory flood.

**Floodplain:** That land adjacent to a stream, channel, or a body of water which has been or may be hereafter covered by flood water, including but not limited to the regulatory flood. See also One Hundred (100) Year Floodplain.

**Focal Point:** An object or group of objects to which one's eyes are naturally drawn because of the way it is framed in its natural setting.

**Focus Areas:** Generalized areas that are the very best examples of the rural Bluegrass identity, with the greatest concentration of valuable resources representing the various Bluegrass landscape types.

**Forest Land:** See woodland.

**Geological Hazard Area:** As defined for purposes of development in Lexington and Fayette County, this term refers to any area in which environmental problems are so

numerous that even severely limited development/use could pose a serious problem to the immediate or surrounding areas. Examples include excessive floodplain areas, clustering of sinkholes, cliff areas, areas that have potential collapse problems due to underground caves near the surface, and similar areas. Lexington-Fayette Urban County Subdivision Regulations, section 1-11.

**Greenspace:** The essential natural and cultural characteristics that give the Bluegrass its special identity and quality of life. Greenspace is more than recognized Bluegrass features such as horse farms, parks, and rock fences. It also encompasses natural environments such as streams, sinkholes, and the Kentucky River; valuable resources such as prime soils; buildings that recall the community's founding and history; the experience of the city or countryside from an automobile; and the ability to travel safely by bicycle or on foot.

**Greenspace Linkages:** Linear corridors such as streams, roads and abandoned railroad rights-of-way that can create an interconnected greenspace system throughout the urban and rural area. The urban greenspace linkage system is an interconnected system of trails, bikeways, natural areas, and attractive streets throughout the city, for non-auto commuting and recreational travel and for visual and environmental enhancement of urban life. The urban greenspace linkage system consists of collector and local greenspace routes:

**Collector Greenspace Route:** As with a road system, there are major collector greenspace routes that travel across town, between districts and neighborhoods. The collector routes link major recreation, retail and entertainment attractions. They also connect with the adult bikeway commuting route to large employment centers and with the major greenspace routes out to the rural area.

**Local Greenspace Route:** At a finer scale than collector greenspace routes, there are local greenspace routes for linkages within neighborhoods. Local routes would be mapped and developed over time, to create greenspace linkages within districts and neighborhoods, to local shopping areas, elementary schools, neighborhood parks, etc.

**Greenspace Overlay Zone:** Similar to the type of zoning district that is already in place in Lexington-Fayette County for Historic Districts (Article 13—Zoning Ordinance). Overlay zones protect certain identified resources found throughout an area. Overlay zoning does not affect the density or use regulations present under existing zoning. Rather, it is superimposed over a government's various zones, creating an additional set of requirements, such as design guidelines or altered setback requirements, to be met when the special resources protected by the overlay would be affected by a proposed change.

**Greenspace Resources:** Natural and cultural characteristics of the Bluegrass identity that were mapped in the greenspace inventory and evaluated for greenspace protection (see list of inventoried resources in Section 1, Chapter IV).



**Greenspace Sites:** Particular locations and properties with significant Bluegrass resources that should be preserved and might be appropriate for public access. Urban greenspace sites are listed in Appendix C.

**Greenspace System:** The rich fabric of greenspace qualities woven together throughout the community, giving it a coherent identity. A greenspace system brings together separate greenspace sites and linkages so that each supports the other, creating a complete environment that has an impact on all aspects of our daily lives.

**Greenspace Zone:** New zone(s) that would be created by amendment of the Lexington-Fayette County Zoning Ordinance to apply the chosen implementation techniques for the greenspace system. These could be an entirely new Greenspace Zone district or Greenspace Overlay Zones.

**Greenway:** As defined in the Greenway Plan, 1992. Lineal open space designed to conserve the natural environment and to integrate people into that environment in a way that does not permanently destroy the functional, aesthetic, or ecological values of that environment. Greenways may include environmentally, culturally, or architecturally significant areas and often are systems linking existing natural and cultural features.

**Groundwater:** Water that fills all of the unblocked pores of material lying beneath the water table.

**Groundwater Recharge Area:** See Aquifer Recharge Area.

**Historic or Cultural Area:** Land with sites, structures, landscapes and objects that have local, regional, statewide, or national historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

**Historic District:** Rural and urban historic districts may be created through established procedures (Article 13-Zoning Ordinance) based on the historical and architectural merits of an area. When a local historic district (or if only one parcel of land, a local landmark) is established, all major exterior changes to buildings, demolition and new construction must be reviewed and approved by the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Board of Architectural Review.

**Incentives:** Voluntary measures that provide benefits to property owners in exchange for their willingness to forgo development or to develop in a way that protects greenspace resources.

**Increased Rural Resource Protection Areas:** Large, consistent landscapes containing a greater density of Significant Rural Resource Concentrations. These rural areas have the greatest sensitivity to any development intrusion or change, and need a greater level of protection than current land use regulations provide.

**Infill:** The development of vacant or bypassed land within the existing development area. Infill does not include the revision or replacement of an existing building(s). Most frequently infill involves small-scale development of scattered vacant or bypassed land,

but it can encompass the assemblage and development of larger tracts of land.

**Intensity:** The degree to which land is used, generally measured by a combination of the type of land use and the amount of land or floor area devoted to that use.

**Inventory:** The compilation of the most relevant and current information pertaining to a subject of study limited only by economic and time constraints.

**Landscape:** All the natural features, such as fields, hills, forests, water, etc., that distinguish one part of the earth's surface from another part. Usually that portion of land or territory which the eye can comprehend in a single view, including all its natural and cultural characteristics.

**Landscape Types:** The different types of rural and urban Bluegrass landscapes that are defined by a distinctive combination of natural and cultural resources. Landscape types were used to evaluate greenspace resources for protection. The Greenspace Plan defines the following landscape types in Section 1, Chapter II:

**Rural Landscape Types** – The Kentucky River and Tributary Creek Valleys, General Agricultural, Horse Farm, and Rural Settlements.

**Urban Landscape Types** – Pre-World War II Neighborhoods, Post-World War II Neighborhoods, and Central Business District / Other Commercial Areas.

**Linkage:** Linkages are open space connections between two geographic points. They may be greenways, parkways, landscaped boulevards, linear parks, median green strips, trailways, or drainage courses available for hiking, bicycling or horse riding. Historically they include park, recreation or ornamental facilities along their length. They are also used to conserve drainage courses and natural areas. See also Greenspace Linkage.

**Local Greenspace Route / Street:** See Greenspace Linkage / Street.

**Native Plant Species:** The plant species that were growing in the Bluegrass Region before settlement. The Native Plant Society of Central Kentucky has a list of preferred trees, shrubs and flowers that was prepared by Julian Campbell. Mary Wharton's book "Bluegrass Land and Life" also lists native plant species for central Kentucky.

**Natural Area:** Any area of land or water, or both land and water, in public or private ownership, which either retains, or has reestablished to some degree its natural character, though it need not be completely natural and undisturbed, or which has natural flora, fauna, biological, ecological, geological, scenic or archaeological features of scientific, aesthetic, cultural or educational interest. KRS 146.415.

**Natural Drainage:** Moisture conditions that existed during the development of the soil, as opposed to altered drainage, which is commonly the result of artificial drainage, irrigation, the alteration of natural channels, or the blocking of drainage outlets.



**Nature Preserve:** A natural area, and land necessary for its protection, any estate, interest of right in which has been formally dedicated under the provision of KRS 146.410 to 146.530 to be maintained as nearly as possible in its natural condition and to be used in a manner and under limitations consistent with its continued preservation, without impairment, disturbance or artificial development, for the public purposes of present and future scientific research, education, aesthetic enjoyment and future scientific research, education, aesthetic enjoyment and habitat for plant and animal species and other natural objects. KRS 146.415.

**Nature Preserves Designation:** A system established by the Commonwealth of Kentucky (KRS Section 416.415) to acquire and hold in trust natural areas and nature preserves. The recognition of these areas are based on established criteria outlined in the KRS. Acquisition of land or interest in land may be by gift, purchase or easement.

**Natural Resource:** For the purposes of this Plan, this refers to: the natural resources and landforms that are significant to the rural Bluegrass identity and way of life; environmentally sensitive resources that are indigenous or distinctive to the rural Bluegrass; and the remaining natural areas and environmentally sensitive resources within the Urban Service Area that show the natural identity of predevelopment Lexington and provide open spaces and experiences of nature within the urban environment.

**Negative Impact/Adverse Impact:** Used interchangeably to describe the result of changes in historic and architecturally significant areas which do not reinforce the character and characteristics of individual elements, sites, structures, streets or whole districts.

**One Hundred (100) Year Flood:** A flood of 100 year frequency, which is the basis for determining the regulatory floodway and floodplain protection measures. Important considerations in selecting the regulatory flood were: the degree of protection required for life and health; consistent standards among adjoining communities; and the requirements for flood protection of state laws, and federal agency requirements.

**Open Space:** Consists of lands used for agricultural or forest uses, and any land area that would, if preserved and continued in its present use:

1. Conserve and enhance natural or scenic resources;
2. Protect air or streams or water supply;
3. Promote conservation of soils or wetlands;
4. Enhance the value to the public of abutting or neighboring parks, forests, wildlife preserves, nature reservations or sanctuaries or other open space;
5. Promote orderly urban development.

**Overlay Zone:** See Greenspace Overlay Zone.

**Parkways:** Linear open space along roadways and other transportation systems. These are usually publicly held, but may be private land opened to public access. Parkways generally serve to connect large units in the park system, connect greenways or to

provide a pleasant means of travel within the city and between the city and an outlying region. The parkway usually follows stream or river alignments, shorelines of large lakes, or natural wooded areas.

**Preserve:** To maintain the status or integrity of an area, site, or view and reserve for a special purpose.

**Prime Farmland:** "Prime farmland" has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, as identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when properly managed. Prime farmland includes cropland, pastureland, rangeland, and forest land. It does not include land converted to urban, industrial, transportation, or water uses.

**Prime Soil:** A specific soil that possesses the properties of prime farmland.

**Protect:** To save from change or loss.

**Purchase of Development Rights (PDR):** Purchase of the right to develop from owners of specific parcels, leaving the owner all other rights of ownership. The price of the rights is the diminution in the market value of the land as a result of the removal of the development rights. The remaining value of the land is the "farm use" value.

**Railroad Corridor:** The easement or right-of-way owned or formerly owned by the railroad for the use of tracks, storage or equipment.

**Redevelopment:** The revision or replacement of an existing building(s). Through acquisition, clearance or rebuilding of a previously developed area according to the Comprehensive Plan, positive long-range land use and social goals are to be achieved (1988 Comprehensive Plan). It should be noted that redevelopment also means that significant existing buildings can be put to use, preserving characteristics which make them historically and/or architecturally significant.

**Rehabilitation or Renovation:** The physical upgrading of a building's materials and support systems while retaining the building's original use.

**Resource:** See Natural Resource and Cultural Resource.

**Restore:** Revitalize, return, or replace original attributes and amenities, such as natural biological productivity, aesthetic and cultural resources, which have been diminished or lost by past alterations, activities, neglect of maintenance, or catastrophic events.

**Restoration, Historic:** Construction work which puts an element, site or structure "back to" a historic configuration and condition.

**Retained/Maintained:** Used in conjunction with one another to describe both the keeping of an element, site, structure, street or district and the assurance of physical



repair and upkeep to those elements, sites, structures, streets and districts.

**Right-of-Way:** Land used generally for streets, sidewalks, alleys, or other public uses. Right-of-way also is a land measurement term, meaning the distance between lot property lines which generally contains not only the street pavement, but also the sidewalks, grass area, and underground and aboveground utilities.

**Rock Fence:** The more popular and common term for a stone fences, sometimes used to distinguish a fieldstone fence from a quarried-stone fence. (see Stone Fence)

**Rural Area:** A sparsely developed area, where the land is primarily used for agricultural purposes. In Fayette County this is land outside the Urban Service Area. Synonymous with the **Rural Service Area**.

**Rural Focus Area:** See Focus Area.

**Rural Historic Landscape:** A geographic area that historically has been used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, occupancy, or intervention, and that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features.

**Rural Road Remnants:** Remaining sections of former rural roads that are now within the Urban Service Area, yet still retain their rural scale and qualities such as mature canopy trees, rock and plank fences near to the roadway, narrow paving with unpaved shoulders, and few curb and gutter improvements. Some rural road remnants, such as Parkers Mill Road, are still in use. Others, such as Squires Road, have been abandoned and replaced with realigned roads.

**Rural Service Area:** As defined in the Comprehensive Plan, the area that is outside of the geographical limit of government-supplied public services and facilities and is designated for rural land uses.

**Rural Settlements:** A relatively small, clustered settlement, which may be located in either the Rural and Urban Service areas. The following are characteristics typically associated with rural settlements in Fayette County: often at a crossroads or stream crossing; small compact development patterns; usually small or narrow lots; pre-twentieth century in origin; and nuclear origin (mill, store, church, tavern, extended family farmstead). Examples include communities such as Athens, South Elkhorn, and Fort Spring.

**Scenic:** A term that typically applies to visible features that have been identified as having special aesthetic value to a community. Scenic features may include lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, outstanding forest areas, pastoral views, notable urban scenes, and historic and cultural resources within a scenic corridor (1992 House Bill 897). As yet there has been no comprehensive visual or scenic assessment of Fayette County. For the purposes of this Plan, references to scenic resources indicate that inventoried resources, such as tree stands and rock fences, are located adjacent to or close to public

roads.

**Scenic Areas:** Lands that are valued for their aesthetic appearance, generally are open areas with natural features that are visually significant or geologically or botanically unique.

**Scenic Corridor:** Routes that traverse a defined visual corridor within which scenic resources and aesthetic values are found. The scenic corridor frames and enhances the roadway. For this reason, the corridor is a much wider area than just the highway right-of-way. It includes outstanding scenic vistas and features, which may be within the immediate roadside area or part of a sweeping distant panorama. The boundaries of the scenic corridor vary with the natural characteristics of the landscape as viewed by a motorist.

**Scenic Easement:** An interest in land transferred by the owner thereof to the public, either in perpetuity or for a term of years. A scenic easement may be created by sale, gift, lease, bequest, or otherwise. An instrument that creates a scenic easement typically contains a covenant whereby the owner of the land promises neither to undertake nor to permit the construction of any improvements upon the land, except as the instrument provides. Scenic easements may be held only by a local governmental body or a state agency. (from KRS 65.410)

**Screening:** A method of visually shielding or obscuring one abutting or nearby structure or use from another by fencing, walls, berms or mounting or densely planted vegetation. (See also Buffer)

**Setback:** The distance between the edge of a building (the front, rear and sidewall construction) and the property line.

**Sidewalk:** Means that portion of a street lying outside the curb lines or lateral lines of a roadway, and within the street line, intended for use of pedestrians.

**Significant:** A resource, element, site, structure, street or district that has important meaning in the natural or cultural context of the community.

**Significant Rural Resource Concentrations:** Specific locations scattered throughout the rural area where resources significant to the Bluegrass identity are clustered together, such as a historic building with a tree stand and rock fence, or a stream with steep slopes and sinkholes.

**Sinkhole:** Any closed depression formed by removal (typically underground) of water, surficial soil, rock or other material. The existence of a sinkhole shall be as indicated by the closed depression contour lines on the Unified Mapping Program topographic maps or other documents as approved by the Urban County Engineer. Its actual limits may, however, be determined by field measurements with concurrence of the Urban County Engineer. Sinkholes may be either circular in plan or irregular depending upon structural control.



**Sinkhole Cluster:** A group of two or more sinkholes located in close proximity.

**Small Area Plan:** The Comprehensive Plan in many instances must be refined to be sensitive to the particular needs of smaller neighborhood areas, corridors, or special resources. The resulting subarea/small area (corridor) plans serve to amend and refine the Comprehensive Plan.

**Staging Area:** Location for the services and facilities that are needed to support public use of the urban and rural greenspace system, such as small parking lots, restrooms, picnic areas, places to buy groceries and gas or rent canoes, restaurants, and overnight accommodations.

**Stone Fence or Wall:** The more formal term for a rock fence, sometimes used to distinguish a quarried-stone fence from a fieldstone fence. (see Rock Fence)

**Stream:** A watercourse having a source and terminus, banks and channel through which waters flow at least periodically.

**Stream Corridor:** See Corridor.

**Street:** Any vehicular way—a general term used to describe right-of-way which provides a channel for vehicular and pedestrian movement between certain points in the community, which may provide for vehicular and pedestrian access to properties adjacent to it, and which may also provide space for the location of under or above-ground utilities. Streets are classified by function as follows:

**Expressways:** Hold the first rank in the classification of streets, and are used only for movement of vehicles, providing for no vehicular or pedestrian access to adjoining properties; interchange of traffic between an expressway and other streets is accomplished by grade separated interchanges with merging deceleration and acceleration lanes, and no at-grade intersections are permitted. Expressways generally carry higher volumes, require greater right-of-way width, and permit higher speed limits than any other class of street, and should be depressed in urban or urbanizing areas. Arterials are the only class of street which generally should be connected with expressways at interchange points.

**Arterials:** Hold the second rank in the classification, and should be used only for the movement of vehicles, and preferably should not provide for vehicular access to adjacent properties. Interruption of traffic flow should be permitted only at street intersections which should contain medians, deceleration lanes, and left turn storage lanes. Arterials are the link between expressways and collectors, and rank next to expressways in traffic volume, speed limit, and right-of-way width.

**Collectors:** Hold the third rank in the classification of streets, and are used both for movement of vehicles and for providing access to adjacent properties. Access to adjoining properties should be planned and controlled so that minimum disturbance is made to the traffic moving efficiency of the collector street.

Intersections should contain medians, deceleration lanes, and left turn storage lanes. Collectors are the link between arterials and local streets, and generally rank next to arterials in traffic volume, speed limit, and right-of-way width.

**Locals:** Hold the fourth rank in the classification of streets, and are used primarily for providing access to adjacent properties. Vehicles moving on these streets should have an origin or destination in the immediate vicinity, and all types of through traffic should be eliminated through initial design of its connections with other streets. Local streets are the primary link between trip generation points (homes, offices, stores, work) and collector streets. Locals have the least right-of-way, the lowest speed limit, and the least amount of vehicular traffic.

**Alleys:** Alleys generally have two open ends, each end connects with different streets, and property generally backs onto both sides of the alley.

**Strip Development:** Development occurring in a linear pattern, usually one-structure deep, adjacent to an existing roadway.

**Tax Incentives:** A tool to protect farmland and greenspace by enacting laws which reshape the financial impact on property owners of these lands.

**Trails:** Pathways designed primarily for walking, running or hiking, paved or unpaved, that are contained in greenspace areas and are a transportation alternative to streets.

**Transfer of Development Rights, (TDR):** See Appendix E.

**Transitional Land Use:** (1) An area in the process of changing from one use to another; (2) An area which acts as a buffer between two land uses of different intensity. A transitional area may be, for example, the land between a business area along a street frontage and the adjacent residential area.

**Undeveloped or Unimproved Land:** Land in its natural state before development.

**Unique Feature:** A natural or cultural feature that is rare or is not generally duplicated in the community or region.

**Urban Design:** The architectural and landscape planning of open spaces and common areas, i.e. streetscape design, site planning, corridor design, etc., including an emphasis on the aesthetic and functional relationships among and between structures and neighborhoods.

**Urban Growth Management Plan:** Lexington-Fayette County has such a plan with details of growth management. This information is found in Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government's Comprehensive Plan.

**Urban Service Area:** A defined region, not coincidental with the Fayette County boundary, that defines the geographical limit of government-supplied public facilities and



services and is the area designated in the Comprehensive Plan for urban development.

**Viewshed:** A visual field; the area of land and structures that is visible from a particular location or linear corridor, such as a road.

**Walkway:** A dedicated public right of way limited to pedestrian traffic.

**Watershed:** The region or area which drains into a river, lake or stream. The total area included within a watershed will vary depending on the drainage system being considered, but usually the total area above a given point on a stream, channel, or lake that contributes runoff water to the stream, channel or lake at that point is called a watershed. See also Drainage Area.

**Wetlands:** Wetlands are transitional areas between terrestrial and aquatic environments where the water table (the level of groundwater) is at or near the ground surface or the land is covered by shallow water. Wetlands are diverse, ranging from tidal flats, salt-hay marshes, and mangrove swamps on the coast, to prairie potholes, peat bogs, and cypress swamps inland. Wetlands provide habitat for numerous fish, waterfowl, and other wildlife, many of which have economic value. Wetlands help to purify the water passing through them by filtering out silt and nutrients.

**Woodland:** An area of planted material covering one (1) acre or more and consisting of thirty (30) percent or more canopy trees having an eight (8) inch or greater caliper, or any grove consisting of eight (8) or more trees having a ten (10) inch or greater caliper.

**Woodland, mature:** An area of plant material covering one (1) acre or more and consisting of thirty (30) percent or more canopy trees having a sixteen (16) inch or greater caliper, or any grove consisting of eight (8) or more trees having an eighteen (18) inch or greater caliper.

**Zone:** A portion of the territory within Lexington-Fayette Urban County within which certain regulations apply under the provisions of the zoning ordinance.

## **APPENDIX B. OTHER LEXINGTON-FAYETTE COUNTY PLANS REVIEWED FOR THE GREENSPACE PLAN**

The concept of "greenspace" is a synthesis of many different planning concerns, from greenways to bikeways. The Lexington-Fayette County community has pursued several planning programs in the past that relate directly to creation of the greenspace system. This section of the Appendix summarizes the background information and proposals of those plans that were considered by the Greenspace Commission. This was an opportunity to review the recommendations of plans that have not been formally adopted by the Urban County Government, such as the Corridor Enhancement Study and Greenway Plan, and bring forward those recommendations that are relevant to the greenspace concept and that will help to implement details of the greenspace system. Many recommendations from other plans have been incorporated throughout the Greenspace Plan. Other, more detailed recommendations of those plans that pertain to greenspace are listed here for incorporation in the Greenspace Plan.

### **1988 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Because the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government began the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan during the greenspace planning process, the 1988 version of the Comprehensive Plan was primarily a source of policy direction and background information. The goals and policies relating to the environment, historic preservation, the urban and rural service area, recreation, regional planning, and the quality and design of new urban growth, urban revitalization, and Downtown development were the foundation for the Greenspace Goals (Section 1, Chapter III) and the Greenspace Physical Plan (Section 1, Chapter IV). Information in the plan about the location of environmentally-sensitive resources, significant botanical areas, planned road improvements, urban activity centers, future land uses, and proposed parks and schools were considered in the inventory and evaluation of greenspace resources and potential sites and linkages (Section 2, Chapter II and III).

The Greenspace Plan is intended to be adopted as an element of the updated Comprehensive Plan. Representatives of the Greenspace Commission and staff met with the Comprehensive Plan Update Committee during 1993 to coordinate the two efforts.

### **CORRIDOR ENHANCEMENT STUDY**

**Purpose:** This study, completed in 1992, has not been adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan. It is concerned with the experience of traveling on roads, and how this influences the Lexington-Fayette County image and identity that is communicated to residents and visitors. The Corridor Enhancement Study provides a framework for selecting road corridors that need enhancement and for designing commercial, industrial, and residential corridor improvements that serve a multitude of purposes. The



recommendations of the study would be further detailed in corridor plans for specific roads, and implementation would be coordinated by the Division of Planning and the Lexington-Fayette Urban County Government Corridors Committee.

**Corridor Enhancement Study Concepts and Recommendations:** The plan assesses the conditions of four categories of corridors – urban developed, urban undeveloped, urban scenic, and rural scenic – and recommends measures to correct existing problems, prevent problems, and protect and enhance corridor assets. These measures encompass landscaping and buffering, pedestrian and bikeway improvements, highway design, urban design, maintenance, signs and billboards, entries, utilities, scenic protections, railroad rights-of-way, regional considerations, and greenways.

Many of the concerns and recommendations of this study were considered during the greenspace planning process. For instance, the Corridors Enhancement Study proposed the idea that pedestrian and bicyclist movement is as significant to road corridor planning as auto movement, and that all land uses should be linked with bikeways and walkways. It recommended creating small-scale staging areas on scenic roads for park-and-bike/hike facilities and evaluating abandoned railroad corridors for development as scenic hiking / biking trails. It also proposed that design of all new streets along wooded corridors and streams should preserve these qualities to create a parkway effect. These recommendations have been further developed and incorporated in the urban and rural physical greenspace plans and implementation strategies (Section 1, Chapters IV and V).

The Greenspace Plan incorporates the corridors enhancement concept. The Greenspace Commission has also forwarded recommendations to the Corridors Committee concerning major road corridors that could be integral to the greenspace system, and has requested that they receive priority attention from the Corridors Committee (Section 1, Chapter VI). Because of the scope of the Corridors Enhancement Study, the Greenspace Commission felt that this aspect of the greenspace system was very well addressed.

The Greenspace Commission was also aware of the corridor plans for specific roads that have been prepared under the auspices of the Corridors Committee and Division of Planning. These plans were reviewed for linkage opportunities (Section 1, Chapter IV). The most detailed of these studies, the South Broadway Corridor Plan, was carefully reviewed as a part of the Greenspace Plan process.

#### ***Other Specific Recommendations Incorporated in the Greenspace Plan***

- Pursue the idea of creating "corridor overlay zones" and a "corridor enhancement ordinance." As the ordinance is drafted and reviewed, determine which of the specific landscaping, urban design, architectural design, utility, and maintenance proposals of this study should be implemented.
- Increase street tree and buffer landscaping in corridors designated for enhancement.
- Develop cooperative relationships between state, federal, and local highway

designers and other interests. Place a higher priority on attractive design of highways, to reflect and enhance the physical, cultural and historic aspects of the community, as well as on safety and efficiency.

- Develop and implement entry designs to highlight the major entrances to Lexington and Fayette County.
- Pursue a scenic evaluation study of rural and urban roads, develop recreational staging areas along scenic roads, and consider scenic protections that can be implemented through a scenic corridor overlay zone. Designate I-75, I-64, and the Kentucky River Palisades as scenic corridors for these protections.
- Encourage adjacent counties to also pursue corridor assessments and adoption of protection measures, and coordinate Lexington-Fayette efforts with theirs.

## **SOUTH BROADWAY CORRIDOR PLAN**

**Purpose:** The South Broadway Corridor Plan is an in-depth examination of revitalization needs. It is also a useful study for examining greenspace system potential. This plan has been adopted as an amendment to the 1988 Comprehensive Plan.

The problems in the South Broadway area are common to older districts at the edges of Downtown characterized by a patchwork of commercial / industrial uses and deteriorating, isolated residential areas. These will be the most challenging areas for creating a greenspace system because there are so few open spaces left. Because these types of areas surround Downtown, it is essential to create a greenspace system traveling within and through them to connect Downtown with these areas and the rest of the city.

**Methods:** Issues identified in this plan are those that present both problems and opportunities for creation of a greenspace system in this district and similar neighborhoods. Problems include: residential areas isolated by railroad, bridge, and commercial / industrial barriers; few and inadequate sidewalks; no capability for safe bicycle travel; and little street landscaping and inadequate setbacks for new landscaping. Opportunities for addressing these problems are: planned street improvements; open space opportunities in areas slated for redevelopment; landmark buildings with adaptive reuse potential; historic districts that provide an image / identity theme for redevelopment; and proposed floodway and retention / detention improvements.

**Recommendations:** The South Broadway Corridor Plan is a model for the kind of detailed planning that will be needed to transform the greenspace concept into site-specific proposals for each neighborhood. There were many recommendations of the plan concerning road and bikeway improvements, landscaping, buffering, and historic building protection and reuse that would help create a greenspace system in this district. These recommendations are summarized below.



### *Other Specific Recommendations Incorporated in the Greenspace Plan*

- Protect existing Vaughns Branch where possible in the warehouse district south of South Broadway and near the Campbell House Golf Course. Maintain the open space at the end of Duncan Avenue and replant the stream banks. Reduction of urban pollutants in stormwater runoff is important to increased greenway / recreational use of Wolf Run Creek and the South Elkhorn.
- Restrict development near known sinkholes along the Southern RR tracks and Forbes Avenue.
- To alleviate flooding in the lower Wolf Run Creek and Vaughns Branch corridor, establish retention / detention systems along Vaughns Branch, including expansion / improvement of the basin on the U.K. property near the railroad south of Virginia Avenue. Design aesthetically appealing detention basins that will be acceptable to existing residents, using plant material instead of rock or concrete. New detention basins and acquired floodway areas could become part of the greenspace system.
- Create extra width in each curb lane for a separate striped bike lane wherever major widening or reconstruction takes place. This could include Waller Avenue, the Newtown Pike extension, and possibly the new north-south residential collector between Virginia and Waller. This would be significant for connecting these isolated residential neighborhoods to proposed greenspace "collector" routes connecting with U.K., major public open spaces in other areas, and the rural area. The proposed Waller underpass should include safe bicycle access; this is the only potential cross-town connection for the greenspace system across the railroad barrier. Create 1-2 feet of extra width in curb lanes for streets not planned for major improvement by restriping inner lanes to 11 feet and constructing sidewalks. South Broadway is also proposed for an improved bicycle / pedestrian movement system.
- Conduct surveys of areas prior to redevelopment to determine their architectural / historic significance and the potential for adaptive reuse and design guidelines that will retain the district's scale and character. Dominant urban design themes are suggested by the tobacco warehouses and the South Hill and Broadway Park residential areas. Major nonresidential buildings that should be retained to keep the area's identity include Continental Warehousing, Scott Hotel / Boots Bar, and Floral Hall at Red Mile Racetrack. Preservation of the Thomas B. Watkins House and grounds is also recommended.
- Medians should be retained and widened during redevelopment, and new medians are proposed where feasible. Create a landscape design theme for street tree and parking lot plantings. Plant medians on South Broadway and Red Mile Road and street trees on Virginia, South Broadway, Harrodsburg Road, Red Mile Road, Waller, and Newtown.

- Replant tree groves as buffers between incompatible land uses and for aesthetic improvement along major roads. Create an open space buffer strip along the Southern Railroad and adjacent utility corridor, connecting to the proposed neighborhood park near Camden and Stanley Avenues. Plant approximately 50 trees per acre in open spaces throughout the plan area, and create buffer strips using earth mounding, trees and shrubs to separate conflicting uses.
- If Red Mile Racetrack redevelops, provide a 22-acre minimum multi-neighborhood park at the southeast end and preserve Floral Hall for public use, and provide a 5 acre neighborhood park at the northwest end.
- Provide significant open space / landscaped areas at the South Broadway Railroad underpass, at the Red Mile Road and South Broadway intersection, and at the South Broadway / Newtown extension intersection as a "gateway" to U.K.

## GREENWAY PLAN

**Background:** The greenway concept, as described in the 1992 Greenway Plan and referenced in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, is an open space system combining opportunities for recreation and environmental protection. The 1988 Comprehensive Plan included the greenway system on the Land Use Map, but did not recommend implementation measures beyond policies for restricting development on environmentally-sensitive lands, including floodplains.

The Greenway Plan refined and developed the urban greenway concepts in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, expanded them with preliminary proposals for the rural area, and proposed implementation methods. The Greenway Plan provided many recommendations for the Greenspace Commission to consider.

**Benefits of Greenways:** The Greenway Plan contains discussion of the evolving urban design concept of greenways and the benefits of greenways, which also apply to the greenspace system. The primary purposes are to institute a natural flood control system, protect sensitive environmental features and geologic hazard areas, and conserve a developing area's natural resources and natural identity. Recreation use, both passive and active, and connections between neighborhoods and parks are additional benefits. The justifications in the plan for greenway protection, such as the flood control justifications on pages 8-10 of the Greenway Plan, are also reasons for incorporating significant greenways into the greenspace system.

**Greenways Identification:** The greenways designated in the Plan encompass: floodplains, defined in the Comprehensive Plan as "areas of special flood hazard identified by the Federal Insurance Administration ... and defined by soils as derived from the Fayette County Soil Survey;" steep slopes (over 15%); rare and unusual plant and animal habitat; outstanding examples of trees or plant life; sinkholes and springs; rock outcroppings; and connections to parks. These resources were also reviewed as a part of the greenspace inventory (Section 1, Chapter IV and Section 2, Chapter II).



Selection of the proposed greenways was based on interpretation of aerial photos and environmental maps prepared by the Division of Planning. Field surveys were limited; the plan identifies drainages that may have potential to be included in a citywide system, but states that further investigation may exclude some of these. The plan identified three types of greenways that are appropriate for various implementation techniques:

- ▶ The *highest priority* greenways are those that would serve public needs for recreation and trails as well as environmental protection and flood control. These are identified in the plan for public acquisition.
- ▶ The *second priority* would be areas that do not have recreation potential but have scenic and flood control potential; these would be protected through deed restrictions and easements, which could also allow limited public access for those trails that are not critical to the system.
- ▶ The *third priority* would be developing lands that do not have significant scenic qualities, or where scenic / natural qualities are already extensively altered. Zoning and subdivision controls would protect floodway capacities and other sensitive environmental features.

The proposed greenway system includes 1,100 acres and 5 miles of connective parkways linking 23 proposed and existing parks. The Greenway Plan maps and describes each greenway. For the purposes of the Greenspace Plan, the Division of Planning was requested to provide a list of those greenways that are known to have substantial remaining natural character. This information was considered in the evaluation of linkage opportunities (Section 2, Chapter IV). For instance, the Greenway Plan pointed out the potential of the South Elkhorn and Hickman Creek drainages in the southern section of the city to serve a connective and recreational function. Many of the greenways were incorporated in the Urban Physical Plan portion of the greenspace system (Section 1, Chapter IV).

**Greenway Plan Concepts and Recommendations:** Because of the parallels between the greenway and greenspace concepts, there were many specific recommendations of the Greenway Plan that are also recommended for incorporation in the Greenspace Plan, such as: joint use of natural drainages for trails, floodplain and habitat protection; creation of a parkway effect where streams and new streets coincide; expanding the concept of bikeways that was pursued in the 1983 Comprehensive Plan (primarily on-street) to encompass recreational off-street bikeways along greenways; and the multi-use of new stormwater detention areas adjacent to streams for recreation. Those recommendations pertaining to stream corridors as part of the urban greenspace system are listed in Section 1, Chapter V under "Implementation Techniques Summarized by Property Types."

**Relationship between Greenspace Plan and Greenway Plan:** To reduce the potential for any confusion between the recommendations of the Greenway Plan, which has not been officially adopted as a part of the Comprehensive Plan, and the Greenspace Plan, which is a part of the Comprehensive Plan, the following describes how the recommendations

of the Greenspace Plan relate to the proposals of the Greenway Plan.

The Greenway Plan (1990) and 1988 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map encompass a larger number of drainages than the initial greenspace system. The primary Greenway Plan goal is to prevent development in the 100-year floodplain and riparian forest in order to preserve the natural flood management capabilities of streams, with the secondary goal of recreation and neighborhood enhancement. The Greenspace Plan is intended to satisfy a wider range of important natural and cultural values, such as protecting historic resources and scenic corridors as well as ecological systems. The greenways that were incorporated in the initial greenspace system are those that are most subject to development and can serve a multitude of functions, including: recreation, trails development and protection of open space, vegetation and wildlife habitat.

As the greenspace system is further detailed for each neighborhood, all designated greenways should be evaluated for incorporation. This evaluation should consider whether greenways that serve a sole flood management purpose are appropriate for the greenspace system, or whether there are other implementation methods for floodplain protection that can be applied through the development approval process to protect greenways.

**Balancing Recreation and Environmental Preservation Needs:** The Greenway Plan and Greenspace Plan make similar recommendations concerning the relative importance of recreational use and environmental preservation. Both plans emphasize preserving the natural qualities of greenways. However, all greenways incorporated in the greenspace system should be considered for recreational access and trails development. This would be done on a case-by-case basis, with concern for property owner privacy and security and the sensitivity of the land to disturbance. For instance, a stream corridor with steep banks or a special habitat may not be appropriate for a trail, which could cause erosion and trampling of plants. If intensive recreational development would trigger the same problems as any intensive urban development, e.g. destruction of natural qualities and creation of flood hazards, then such development would be inappropriate for that stream corridor. Otherwise, public recreational use of portions of greenways should be encouraged.

#### ***Other Specific Recommendations Incorporated in the Greenspace Plan***

The Greenway Plan proposed the following detailed recommendations that should be considered in small area planning and project design for the greenspace system:

- Where the course of streams and new or existing streets coincide, a parkway effect should be created through greenway protection / enhancement. (The Plan lists specific streets, pp.5-6.)
- Opportunities for large-scale community parks in the rural area are listed (pages 7, 23, and 51-53), especially along the Kentucky River and tributaries.
- Locations of flood problem areas (pp.11-12) are shown, with a design concept for



multi-use recreation / stormwater detention areas adjacent to streams (page 14).

- The Plan points out the cost-savings of locating gravity sewers along streams and combining land needs for recreation and utilities, and notes as an example the potential for a combined greenway / sanitary sewer gravity line along Viley Road extended between Leestown and Georgetown Roads. However, the system must be designed so that sewer construction does not damage streambank vegetation.
- The need to protect land adjacent to Man O'War to the west, along the South Elkhorn and Cave Creek, was mentioned due to presence of multiple sinkholes and undisturbed drainages that retain natural flood control capabilities.
- Restoration / protection of Town Branch was proposed, with added detention capacity and a trail along Wolf Run / Town Branch. Field investigation during the Greenspace Plan found that this would be a long-term project, due to the steep slopes, existing walls and buildings, and hazardous land uses that line Town Branch.
- The specific maps and descriptions of each greenway are on pages 42-53. Where the greenway proposals coincide with lands included in the proposed greenspace system, the detailed design proposals of the Greenway Plan should be considered during project planning.
- A more detailed study of each site is needed as areas develop, as well as specific surveys of valuable plant species and geologic / stream features.
- Design criteria and maintenance guidelines are suggested for development of recreation and public access facilities in greenways. These are also appropriate to greenspace system improvements.
- The Plan lists specific greenways with bike path potential (page 6).

## **BIKEWAY PLANNING**

Bicycle facility planning has been spearheaded by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), staffed by the Transportation Planning Section of the Division of Planning. The initial step in the planning, the Priority 1 Bicycle Facilities Plan, listed improvements recommended for funding under the Enhancement Program of the federal Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Although ISTEA funding was not received for these projects in 1993, the Priority 1 Plan facilities were considered by the Greenspace Commission as linkage opportunities (Section 2, Chapter III).

During the greenspace planning effort, the MPO staff worked with the Greenspace Commission staff to further develop a comprehensive bikeway plan throughout the city. Prior to the greenspace effort, bikeway planning was primarily for on-street facilities, with an emphasis on adult commuting as a transportation option. The greenspace process

also explored development of an off-street system for recreation and use by children, which would interconnect with the on-street system. These ideas and the proposed bikeway routes were incorporated in the urban and rural physical greenspace plan (Section 1, Chapter V). The MPO staff is refining the bikeways plan for inclusion in the Long Range Transportation Plan now underway.

The Lexington-Fayette Division of Parks also plays a role in bikeway planning. Parks has prepared a loop on-street / off-street bikeway plan, the Hickman Creek system, which connects the Belleau Woods and Bellafonte Bikeways through Veterans Park. This bikeway was considered as a greenspace model for linking on-street and off-street bikeways and connecting residential neighborhoods with schools, shopping, parks, and employment centers.



## APPENDIX C. LIST OF POTENTIAL URBAN GREENSPACE SITES

### IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL GREENSPACE SITES

The process for identifying these urban sites with greenspace significance and potential is described in Section 2, Chapter III of the Greenspace Plan. Policies and recommendations concerning these sites are discussed in Section 1, Chapter IV of the Plan.

### KEY TO TYPES OF SITES

- R**     **Resource Cluster** (Site has a concentration of greenspace resources.)  
**TL**    **Trail Link** (Site is adjacent to or portion of a trail.)  
**P-1**   **Park Need** (There is no accessible public park within 1 mile walking distance.)  
**P-2**   **Park Proposed** (Site is near a park location proposed on Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan.)

### LIST OF POTENTIAL GREENSPACE SITES

Potential greenspace sites are listed by the urban map sector in which they are located. Site numbers correspond to sites shown on the Urban Greenspace Physical Plan map.

#### *Sector 11b*

1. R, TL  
South Elkhorn community: Higbee House, store buildings, stone bridge, stone fence, remnant of old Harrodsburg Rd., tree stands, creek, steep slopes, rural character of Bowman's Mill Rd. along creek, includes triangle between bridge and Bowman's Mill Rd.; priority greenway  
  
Potential link to Firebrook through private greenway to Bryan House (Firebrook Clubhouse). Proximity to Helm Place which is a local historic landmark to the east on Bowmans Mill Road. West end of linkage across S. Elkhorn where additional vacant (small floodplain parcels) exist
2. R, P-2, TL  
Beaumont Development Area has cave adjacent to Man O War Blvd. Dunbar High School; proposed greenways in Beaumont areas indicated as sites for retention basins

### **Sector 11**

3. R, P-1  
Southeast quadrant of the intersection of Clays Mill and New Circle has spring and waterway
4. TL  
Branch of S. Elkhorn on Reynolds property leading to Fayette Mall and the top of Shillito Park
5. P-1  
Monticello Park
6. TL  
GTE private open space adjacent to trail (no fence)
7. TL, P-1  
Vacant parcels along S. Elkhorn Creek
8. P-1  
Mill Pond Center adjacent to priority greenway with large trees. There is a pond adjacent to Higbee Mill Rd.
9. TL, P-1, P-2  
There is a proposed park near Waveland which is on Higbee Mill, a road with some rural character and trees.

### **Sectors 9b and 10**

10. TL  
Southwest corner of the intersection of Man O War and West Hickman to the west side of Bates Creek Center South; connects to south end of Belleau Woods bikeway; to the west is the Combs Farm (site 11)
11. R, P-1, P-2, TL  
Combs Farm, 2 botanical areas; one to south is part of Narrow Lane Farm
12. TL, P-1  
Lower South Elkhorn tributary through Narrow Lane Farm
13. TL, P-1  
Vacant triangle across Nicholasville Road from Waveland. Farm tunnel under Nicholasville Road.
14. R, TL  
East branch of West Hickman Creek at the Fayette-Jessamine Co. line; historic house, steep slopes, priority greenway
15. P-2, R  
West side of Bates Creek Rd. is area that is vacant with steep slopes, tree stands, and noted for potential location for park
16. TL, P-1  
Private nature preserve along the northeast quadrant of the intersection of Armstrong Mill and Bates Creek Rd.
17. P-1, P-2, R, TL  
W.T. Young's land containing E. Hickman Creek, pond, and greenway
18. TL  
Armstrong Mill-Delong connection along W.T. Young horse farm property; priority greenway
19. TL  
Armstrong Mill at Squires Rd., northwest quadrant is vacant



### **Sector 9**

- 20. R, TL, P-2  
West side of lake from Alumni to Richmond Rd.; area below dam from Squires to Richmond Rd.
- 21. TL  
Vacant property at southwest corner of Man O War and Palumbo
- 22. R, P-1  
Cadentown resource cluster: store and church close to abandoned railroad line and Man O War
- 23. R, TL  
Resource cluster adjacent to abandoned railroad right-of-way and Man O War Blvd.; potential park and staging area for rails to trails
- 24. R, P-1, P-2, TL  
I-75 south of railroad at the headwaters of East Hickman Creek
- 25. R, P-1  
Cluster of trees north of Todds Rd. and south of I-75; water
- 26. R  
Area adjacent to lake has trees

### **Sector 8**

- 27. R, P-1, P-2  
Liberty Rd. barrens (botanical area)
- 28. R, P-1, P-2  
Area between Liberty Rd. and railroad adjacent to vocational school; steep slopes; trees
- 29. R, TL, P-1, P-2  
Steep slopes, priority greenway, adjacent to proposed park, fork of N. Elkhorn on Hamburg Place
- 30. TL, R, P-1, P-2  
Horse cemetery and waterway on Winchester Rd. (proposed park nearby); part of N. Elkhorn
- 31. R, P-2  
Pond/ vegetation (bald cypress) near Old Paris Pike and I-75

### **Sector 7**

- 32. R  
Paris Pike: west side of Paris Pike west of Mary Todd Elementary School has trees and stream
- 33. R  
Between Winburn Park and library: west of Russell Cave has trees sinkhole, historic house
- 34. TL, R  
Tree stand at IBM property north of New Circle along creek to Newtown Pike
- 35. R, P-1  
Carnahan House has trees and historic house

36. TL, R, P-1  
Stone-lined pond and creek,  
sycamore trees along the I-75  
frontage and stone walls along  
Newtown Pike frontage

37. TL, P-1  
Oakwood expansion to Cane Run

#### **Sector 6**

40. R, TL, P-1, P-2  
Viley extended between Greendale  
and railroad. Has creek, steep  
slopes, historic properties, proposed  
neighborhood park

41. R, P-1, P-2  
Between the tributaries of north  
branch of Town Branch, sinkholes  
along ridge

42. R, P-1  
Hillenmeyer Nursery on south side  
of Sandersville Rd. has historic  
building, stone walls

#### **Sector 5**

47. R, P-2  
McConnell Springs (12 acres south  
of industrial site)

#### **Sector 4**

49. R, TL  
James Lane Allen House is adjacent  
to the school down the street from  
Beaumont

50. R, TL  
Alexander Estate has trees, historic  
house. At the end of the lane  
behind house is private open space.

38. R  
Sanders House, trees, pond,  
sinkhole, rock fences on east side of  
Georgetown Rd.

39. R, TL, P-1  
Historic house, north of New Circle  
Rd. between railroad and  
Georgetown Rd.

43. R, P-1  
Spring Valley Country Club on  
Greendale Rd. has historic site and  
sinkholes

44. R, TL, P-1  
Cave, spring, historic property,  
northwest of intersection of Viley  
and railroad

45. R  
Southeast quadrant of the  
intersection of Viley and the railroad

46. R, P-1  
Town Branch behind the Veterans  
Administration Hospital on Leestown  
Rd.; tree clusters and historic site

48. R, TL  
Red Mile Racetrack

51. R, TL  
Parkers Mill area w/steep slopes and  
trees



### **Sector 3**

- 52. R, TL  
Mansfield House on Richmond Rd.:  
historic house w/trees
- 53. R, P-2  
Kentucky American Water Co.  
property on the northwest side of  
the lake
- 54. R  
Finger of the lake, wooded area
- 55. TL, P-1  
Streamside where W. Hickman  
Creek comes out of reservoir at  
Alumni, small picnic area and  
pedestrian bridge
- 56. R  
West Hickman: steep slopes, trees  
through developments between  
Alumni and New Circle
- 57. R, TL  
Johnson Woods on south end of the  
Arboretum on UK property
- 58. TL, P-1  
Vacant lot w/trees, proposed  
extension of Loudon from  
Winchester to Liberty

### **Sector 2**

- 59. R, P-1, P-2  
Branch of Elkhorn between 900  
Meadow Way and railroad, east of  
Floyd Drive has trees and proposed  
park (36 acres zoned industrial)
- 60.  
Proposed Bryan Ave. realignment  
west of Loudon
- 61. R  
Eastern State Hospital, trees,  
sinkhole
- 62. R  
Area north of Douglas Park, tree  
stand
- 63. R, TL  
Lexington Cemetery/Calvary  
Cemetery
- 64. R, TL, P-1  
Tree stand at IBM-Lexmark near  
WLEX, south of New Circle

## **APPENDIX D. GREENSPACE PRIORITIZATION SYSTEM AND CRITERIA CHECKLIST**

The proposed process for prioritizing greenspace site and linkage properties for implementation is described in Section 1, Chapter V of the Greenspace Plan. The two-step process uses checklists of criteria related to greenspace goals and resources. The first step is the Values Matrix, and the second step is the Pragmatic Matrix.

There are different Values Matrices for various landscape types, although some landscape types have been combined. For instance, there is a Values Matrix specifically for all rural landscape types except for Rural Settlements. This matrix is to be used for greenspace properties located within the Kentucky River Valley and Tributaries Landscape, General Agricultural Landscape, and Horse Farm Landscape. The checklist items in each Values Matrix have been tailored to those that are appropriate to that particular group of landscape types.

However, there is only one Pragmatic Matrix, to be used for all properties in the second step of the process. The matrices are given in full below, and their use is described in the Plan.



## **STEP ONE: VALUES MATRICES**

### **VALUES MATRIX FOR SITES IN RURAL SERVICE AREA (Excluding Rural Settlements)**

#### **SPECIAL DESIGNATION**

Historic property listed on the National Register

Historic property with local landmark overlay (H-1)

Scenic Highway designation

Site is only one of its kind in Fayette Co. (rare unique, limited, scarce)

Botanical area listed in Comprehensive Plan

Tree Board Tree Designation

Habitat of endangered species

Most significant example of resource type in Fayette Co.

Site designated by State Nature Preserves Commission

Site designated by The Nature Conservancy

#### **COMMUNITY USE PATTERNS**

Site is in staging area

Site is in Focus Area

Site has potential for greenbelt/long-term urban edge

Site is near existing park

Site is near identified park need/proposed park

Site is near school/college campus

Site is proposed for environmental education program

Site is proposed for cultural education program

Greenway

Abandoned railroad right-of-way corridor

Pedestrian trail/jogging trail

Nature/hiking trail

Bike route

Horse trail

Automobile driving tour

Fishing opportunities

Boating opportunities

100-year floodplain

(Continued next page)

*Rural Service Area Values Matrix*  
*page 2*

*RESOURCE TYPES*

Prime soil	Lake
Secondary soil	River
Mature tree stands/forested area	Stream (blue line USGS)
Wildflower area	Waterfall
Savannah woodland/ woodland pasture	Rapids
Single mature trees	Deep pools
Canopied road corridor	Wildlife habitat
Fence row	Historic survey site
Cave	Archeological site
Sinkhole	Stone fence
Spring	Wood plank fence
Special geological formations (flow stones/calcified waterfalls, faulted rock, folded rock)	Mills
Palisades	Dam
Rock outcropping	Open fields/traditional field patterns
Steep slope (over 15%)	Cemetery (human or horse)
Gently rolling terrain	Entrances/gate houses
High point	Paddocks
Pond	Tobacco barns and fields
	Agricultural building complex
	Other



## VALUES MATRIX FOR DOWNTOWN / COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

### *SPECIAL DESIGNATION*

Historic property listed on National Register	Botanical area listed in Comprehensive Plan
Historic property with local landmark overlay (H-1)	Tree Board Tree Designations
Scenic Highway designation	Habitat of endangered species
Site is only one of its kind in Fayette Co. (rare unique, limited, scarce)	Most significant example of resource type in Fayette Co.

### *COMMUNITY USE PATTERNS*

Site is near existing park	Abandoned railroad right-of-way corridor
Site is near identified park need	Pedestrian trail/jogging trail
Site is near school/college campus	Bike route
Site proposed for cultural resource program	Automobile driving tour
Site proposed for environmental education	100-year floodplain
Greenway	

### *RESOURCE TYPES*

Marginal forested area/ tree stands	Garden
Wildflower area	Statuary
Single mature trees	Fountain
Canopied road corridor/street trees	Church yards
Wildlife habitat	Parkways
Historic survey site	Grassy area
Archeological site	Size (acre or more)
Stone fence	Other
Cemetery	

**VALUES MATRIX FOR  
SITES IN URBAN SERVICE AREA  
(Excluding Downtown / Commercial Areas and Rural Settlements)**

*SPECIAL DESIGNATION*

Historic property listed on the National Register	Botanical area listed in Comprehensive Plan
Historic property with local landmark overlay (H-1)	Tree Board Tree Designations
Scenic Highway designation	Habitat of endangered species
Site is only one of its kind in Fayette Co. (rare unique, limited, scarce)	Most significant example of resource type in Fayette Co.

*COMMUNITY USE PATTERNS*

Site in staging area	Pedestrian trail/jogging trail
Site is near existing park	Bike route
Site is near identified park need	Automobile driving tour
Site is near school	Significant corridor to Downtown
Site is proposed for environmental education program	100-year floodplain
Site is proposed for cultural education program	Fishing opportunities
Greenway	Boating opportunities
Abandoned railroad right-of-way corridor	Horse trails

*RESOURCE TYPES*

Mature tree stands/forested area	Cave
Wildflower area	Sinkhole
Single mature trees	Spring
Canopied road corridor/street trees	Steep slope (over 15%)
Fence row	(Continued on next page)



*Values Matrix for  
Sites in Urban Service Area  
Page 2*

*RESOURCE TYPES (Continued)*

Rock outcropping	Dam
Pond	Cemetery
Lake	Garden
Stream (blue line USGS)	Fountain
Wildlife habitat	Median
Historic survey site	Church yard
Archeological site	School yard
Stone fence	Other
Wood plank fence	

## VALUES MATRIX FOR SITES IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

### *SPECIAL DESIGNATION*

Historic property listed on the National Register

Historic property with local landmark overlay (H-1)

Scenic Highway designation

Site is only one of its kind in Fayette Co.  
(rare unique, limited, scarce)

Botanical area listed in Comprehensive Plan

Tree Board Tree Designations

Habitat of endangered species

Most significant example of resource type in Fayette Co.

### *COMMUNITY USE PATTERNS*

Site in staging area

Site is near existing park

Site is near identified park need

Site is near school

Site is proposed for environmental education program

Site is proposed for cultural education program

Greenway

Abandoned railroad right-of-way corridor

Pedestrian trail/jogging trail

Bike trail

Automobile driving tour

100-year floodplain

Fishing opportunities

Boating opportunities

Horse trails

### *RESOURCE TYPES*

Mature tree stands/forested area

Wildflower area

Single mature trees

Canopied road corridor/street trees

Fence row

Cave

Sinkhole

Spring

Steep slope (over 15%)

Rock outcropping

Pond

(Continued on next page)



*Values Matrix for  
Sites in Rural Settlements  
Page 2*

*RESOURCE TYPES (Continued)*

Lake	Cemetery
Stream (blue line USGS)	Garden
Wildlife habitat	Fountain
Historic survey site	Median
Archeological site	Church yard
Stone fence	School yard
Wood plank fence	Other
Dam	

**STEP TWO:**  
**PRAGMATIC MATRIX**

**FOR ALL PROPERTIES**

*TIMELINESS*

Site is on sales market (purchase, gift, easement)

Site is threatened (development; loss of trees; loss of historic site; loss of archeological site)

Proposed infrastructure improvements (site development; road construction) have potential to enhance site for Greenspace

*CONNECTION / PROXIMITY*

Site is key to linkage

Site completes linkage

Site creates link between existing sites

Site is adjacent to trail system

Site is adjacent to publicly-owned land

Site is adjacent to privately-owned dedicated land

*FEASIBILITY*

Site is owned by "willing" landowners

Cost of property meets appraisal

Grant money available

Sites improves geographic distribution of Greenspace system



## APPENDIX E. IMPLEMENTATION TECHNIQUES THAT ARE NOT RECOMMENDED FOR GREENSPACE

The Funding Subcommittee considered various greenspace implementation techniques and recommended to the Greenspace Commission those techniques that were determined to be appropriate for Lexington-Fayette County. Recommended techniques are listed in Section 1, Chapter V of the Plan. The following techniques were carefully evaluated and rejected by the Committee as inappropriate, for reasons generally cited below. The Greenspace Commission agreed with the Committee recommendation that these implementation techniques should not be pursued.

### GREENSPACE TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

*Transfer of development rights (TDR):* TDR is a program by which development rights on land in a designated preservation area, or "sending zone," may be purchased by a developer and transferred to a designated development area, or "receiving zone," where the equivalent amount of additional development can be constructed. The Commonwealth of Kentucky has authorized local governments to adopt such a program (KRS 100.208).

However, TDR programs have only been successful in areas of the country with much more intense urban development pressures than exist in Lexington. Also, such programs require that the underlying zoned density of properties in the receiving zones must be low enough that the increased density is both acceptable under the Comprehensive Plan and marketable to developers. Neither is the case within the Urban Service Area. The current Land Use Plan designates properties at the optimum density, and there is no demand for substantially higher densities.

*Cluster development:* Cluster development is a concept for rural residential subdivision. In a cluster subdivision, the number of houses allowed on a property is determined according to the pre-existing zoned density. However, the houses are clustered together on smaller lot sizes than allowed under the pre-existing agricultural zone. The minimum lot size is typically set according to the minimum area needed for a septic system.

As an example, a 100 acre farm could have 10 housing units if the current zoned density is 1 unit per 10 acres. However, all 10 homes could be clustered in one location, on 1 acre lots. The remaining 90 acres of the farm would no longer have development rights, e.g. there would be no further subdivision potential for residential purposes. This portion of the parent tract would go under a permanent open space easement precluding any further development of housing. In essence, cluster development allows a land owner to realize the development potential of the land while preserving the majority of the property as farmland.

Other typical cluster standards seek to avoid the negative impacts of standard rural residential subdivision. There may be requirements that all lots share a common

entrance onto an existing public road, with an internal private road. Locational standards attempt to set clusters back from public roads and screen them from view.

The cluster concept was rejected by the Commission because it would encourage rural growth to a greater degree than current land use policies for the Rural Service Area allow, which would be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, as yet there have been few cluster developments in the Bluegrass, and the potential impacts are unknown. The locational and screening standards that are a key part of a cluster program and that have been effective in forested rural areas of the country are unlikely to be effective in the Bluegrass, where open fields and gentle topography leave few locations where clusters would not be visible from public roads.

## FUNDING SOURCES

*Property Transfer Tax:* A property transfer tax bill has been introduced in the General Assembly on several occasions and has been soundly defeated. Based upon past experience, the enactment of this type of legislation is unlikely.

*Restaurant Tax:* This measure would require legislation on both the local and state levels. It is anticipated that this type of tax would meet with much opposition from the owners of local restaurants as well as from consumers.