



Summit County General Land Use Development Plan

Executive Summary

The Summit County General Land Use Development Plan is a policy plan. The overall goal of the General Land Use Development Plan is to add a county-level perspective and planning direction that complements and strengthens local planning efforts. The Summit County General Land Use Development Plan will also be referred to in this document as the General Plan.

The Summit County General Land Use Development Plan outlines a policy guide for public decisions regarding development issues in the County over the next twenty years. It calls for a more sustainable approach to development. Sustainable development has been defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."¹

The following are important sustainable development goals and reflect the goals set forth in the Summit County General Plan:

- ◆ **The promotion and maintenance of healthy environments, featuring clean air and water**
- ◆ **The conservation of energy, soils, and water supplies**
- ◆ **The reduction, reuse and recycling of waste**
- ◆ **The clean up of brownfield sites**
- ◆ **An emphasis on the reuse of existing buildings and infill development rather than buildings on open greenfields in the outer suburbs**
- ◆ **The promotion of mass transit and compact, transit-oriented development**
- ◆ **The construction of mixed-use commercial and residential development that includes public parks and emphasizes walking and biking**
- ◆ **The designation of compact growth areas that have services available to support development**
- ◆ **The separation of developing areas from sensitive natural areas, to avoid natural hazards and to protect wildlife habitats**
- ◆ **The creation of greenways – linear paths and corridors – to connect cities and towns to the countryside and to each other**
- ◆ **The designation of areas for open space conservation development based on community preservation and open space planning goals**
- ◆ **The protection of productive farming and forestry areas**

The intended long-range result of this plan is to protect the quality of life for the residents of the county while accommodating economic growth, coupled with less expenditure of public tax funds, and less impact upon the environment. The development of the General Plan was guided by the Summit County Planning Commission with the assistance of AMATS, NEFCO and county departments and townships. The Summit County Department of Community and Economic Development Planning Division staff prepared the Summit County General Land Use Development Plan.

¹ The World Commission 1987, p. 43

Summit County Natural Resources Study Modeling

Allowing for higher density development, if coupled with natural resource and open space protection programs, can reduce the impact of the built area on the environment. By concentrating development and people within a smaller geographic area, density reduces land consumption and allows communities to protect valuable open space, habitat, farmland and ecologically sensitive areas.

A build-out projection model was utilized in the Summit County Natural Resources Study (2003). Using the “*What If*” planning model, the study looked at changes in land use by projections of acres of vacant land converted to residential, commercial and industrial uses. Using the “*What If*” model, Summit County modeled two alternative scenarios to depict possible impacts of land use measures on future land use patterns, in Scenario 1 there was no change to current land use controls and open space protection. In Scenario 2, there was a use of environmental protection and open space acquisition measures. It was found in the Scenario 2 model that thirty-six percent more land was preserved when environmental land use controls were in place, and yet basically the same amount of development could occur. ²

In essence, this build-out analysis reflects that a balance of development and environmental protection may be reasonably accommodated. However, the realities of development are that as communities reach the build-out stage, there is more pressure to develop environmentally sensitive lands. So communities need to plan and implement natural resource protection measures before development is proposed, if they wish to preserve natural areas, green infrastructure and the public health and safety functions they provide.

DISCUSSION OF SMART GROWTH

Like many parts of Ohio and the United States, Summit County is growing slowly in population and jobs, yet we are rapidly converting undeveloped open space to more urbanized uses such as housing, subdivisions, shopping centers and roads. The population of Akron is declining as residents move to the suburban cities and townships. Out-migration from the Cleveland metropolitan area has contributed to high growth in northern Summit County. This sprawling form of development undermines the health of existing urban areas, destroys farmland and irreplaceable natural resources, and creates environmental problems.

However, Summit County and the rest of Northeast Ohio have a chance to make positive changes and slow these destructive development trends. As staff at EcoCity Cleveland observes, “we have the chance to come out ahead of other regions. As troubling as our situation is, it is not as dire as the situation of many regions. Our growth has been slower, more digestible. We have not sprawled as much. We still have a manageable urban area. We offer a high quality of life at a low cost of living. In short, we are not in a crisis like Atlanta or parts of California. We have the opportunity to think about our growth, plan well, and do it right. We have our opportunity. Let’s seize it.”³

2 Natural Resources Study, Summit County, Ohio 2003, p. 96

3 See www.ecocitycleveland.org for full report on Smart Growth



What is Sprawl?

Sprawl is the inefficient and unplanned conversion of rural land to exurban and suburban uses. It is typically manifested in development that is low-density, scattered (“leapfrog”), single-use and automobile-dependent. Sprawl is often characterized by the loss of green space, increased traffic congestion, increased pollution and higher taxes and service costs. Anthony Downs of the Brookings Institution identifies ten characteristics that are typical of sprawling development patterns:

- Predominance of low-density residential and commercial settlements, especially in new growth areas.
- Unlimited outward extension of new developments.
- Leapfrog projects jumping beyond established settlements.
- Single-use development that separates shopping, working and residential activities.
- Low-density, single-use work places and strip retail development typically located at the periphery of metropolitan areas.
- Reliance on auto transportation for virtually all trips.
- Fiscal disparities among localities.
- Lack of adequate housing choices located close to work opportunities, thus forcing long commutes.
- Reliance mainly on trickle-down older housing to provide housing to low-income households.
- Fragmented land use decisions by local governments.

What is Smart Growth?

Smart Growth recognizes connections between development and quality of life, and leverages new growth to improve the community. The features that distinguish smart growth in a community vary from place to place, but in general, smart growth invests time, attention, and resources in restoring community and vitality to center cities and older suburbs. New smart growth is more town-centered, is transit and pedestrian oriented, and has a greater mix of housing, commercial, and retail uses. It also preserves open space and other environmental amenities.

Smart Growth is development that serves the economy, community, and the environment. Although there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution, successful communities do tend to have one thing in common - a vision of where they want to go and of what things they value in their community – and their plans for development reflect these values. This is Smart Growth.

Smart Growth principles address a number of key issues important to Summit County, including:

Quality of Life

Smart Growth offers a framework to build community, and help create and preserve a sense of place. It does this through housing and transportation choices, green spaces, recreational and cultural attractions, and policies and incentives that promote mixed-use neighborhoods.

Design

Smart Growth creates communities that offer health, social, economic, and environmental benefits for all. It achieves this by promoting resource-efficient building and community designs, green building practices, low-impact development, and mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods.

Economics

Smart growth encourages community-based small business investment and development, adds to the variety of local employment opportunities, and helps attract new businesses and industries. More efficient government services are key to this, as are public and private investments that focus on quality of life improvements.

Environment

Many of our current environmental challenges – air and water pollution, global warming, and natural habitat fragmentation – are due in part to the way we have built our communities and metropolitan areas during the past half-century. Smart growth attempts to change development patterns and processes to reduce negative environmental impacts.

Health

Smart growth reduces health threats from air and water pollution and indoor air contaminants through resource-efficient building design, and offering transportation options such as mass transit, bike lanes, and pedestrian walkways. These engage residents and workers in a more active, healthy lifestyle.

Housing

Smart growth promotes housing options for diverse lifestyles and socio-economic levels. It does this through mixed-use, affordable housing and compact development that revitalizes neighborhoods and provides an alternative to automobile-dependent communities.

Transportation

Smart growth protects public health and environmental quality, conserves energy, and improves the quality of life in communities by promoting new transportation choices and transit-oriented development.

Ten Principles of Smart Growth

Smart growth success share common attributes. Moreover, although different organizations use varying language, the basic and underlying principles of smart growth remain the same. The Smart Growth Network, an organization formed in 1996 by a number of organizations including the State of Maryland, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Association of



Realtors, identifies the following ten principles as a framework for smart growth discussion and action:

1. Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

Providing quality housing for people of all income levels is an integral component in any smart growth strategy.

2. Create Walkable Neighborhoods

Walkable communities are desirable places to live, work, learn, worship and play, and therefore a key component of smart growth.

3. Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

Growth can create great places to live, work and play – if it responds to a community’s own sense of how and where it wants to grow.

4. Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

Smart growth encourages communities to craft a vision and set standards for development and construction, which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness, as well as expanded choices in housing and transportation.

5. Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective

For a community to be successful in implementing smart growth, it must be embraced by the private sector.

6. Mix Land Uses

Smart growth supports the integration of mixed land uses into communities as a critical component of achieving better places to live.

7. Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas

Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, improving our communities’ quality of life, and guiding new growth into existing communities.

8. Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities, and transportation is a key aim of smart growth.

9. Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

Smart growth directs development towards existing communities already served by infrastructure, seeking to utilize the resources that existing neighborhoods offer, and conserve open space and irreplaceable natural resources on the urban fringe.

10. Take Advantage of Compact Building Design

Smart growth provides a means for communities to incorporate a more compact building design as an alternative to conventional, land consumptive development.

Every individual community, county and state has smart growth responsibility --- we cannot wait for the “other guy” to address issues that affect our quality of life. The principles of smart growth



support the vision identified in this Summit County General Land Use Development Plan and address key planning and development issues important to Summit County. Therefore, the Summit County Planning Commission Steering Committee has adopted the ten principles of smart growth as a planning framework for developing more specific goals, objectives and implementation strategies in the Plan. Each chapter in the Plan will address and incorporate the principles of smart growth relevant to the planning issues.

The following summary refers to the vision and goals that serve as the basic policy framework for the plan, which are the major recommendations and strategies for implementation. As a fundamental basis of the process, surveys were completed by community officials for their input into the planning effort as the plan was formulated.

VISION AND GOALS

Properly managed and rationally planned development, the creation and linkage of open space areas, prime farmland preservation, an expanded range of housing opportunities, and economic development are the unified vision of the plan. The vision is to utilize Smart Growth principles to improve land use planning and development patterns in Summit County.

Cultural Resources and Historic Preservation: The overarching goal is to safeguard the heritage of Summit County by preserving those aspects of our built and natural environments that embody important elements of our culture and history. Cultural and historic resources should be identified and preserved.

Economic Development: Orderly light industrial growth should be encouraged in areas properly zoned for it. Commercial development should be sensitive to its impact upon existing commercial areas (particularly central business districts), family farms and related agribusinesses should be assisted, and the tax implications of development should be examined. Utilize incentives to enhance regional economic development, and cooperate with other Northeast Ohio communities for the common good of the region. Revitalize existing commercial and industrial areas before developing new facilities wherever possible. Encourage better communication between businesses, secondary, trade and technical schools, and local colleges and universities to identify necessary employee skills, business development needs and corresponding educational requirements.

Housing: Housing opportunities should be addressed with emphasis on affordability, building code compliance and revitalization of the housing stock in accordance with the adopted Summit County Consolidated Plan (2005-2009). The consolidated plan is basically a strategic housing plan that outlines to the federal government how Summit County plans to work on providing safe and affordable housing and providing a suitable living environment (especially for low-to-moderate income persons).

Demographics: Economic development and land use concerns need to be addressed for the expanding population. The population is aging and becoming more diverse. Baby boomers as they reach 50+ remain the largest, most important demographic group in America. As the baby boomers age, they are becoming the fastest growing segment of the housing market.



Utilities: Provision of service in a cost-effective manner is a priority. Central sewer and water infrastructure should be installed only in accordance with an adopted service area plan for the affected community. Service area plans should be devised with the input of local officials.

Natural Resources: Natural resources and green infrastructure should be conserved. Green infrastructure such as floodplains, wetlands and streams can provide free natural services. Natural systems provide important services such as flood control, stormwater management and pollution filtration. The loss of these services increases the risks of flooding.

Land Use: Growth and development should be managed and balanced with protecting sensitive natural resources, and open space areas should be linked when feasible. Zoning should be in harmony with community comprehensive plans.

Transportation: The transportation system should continue to be examined in order to address existing and expected traffic flow based upon level of service criteria. Maintenance of the existing system is a priority. Multi-modal transportation systems should be explored.

Summit County General Plan Goals, and Objectives

The following is a Summary of the Goals and Objectives found in the Summit County General Plan. Chapter -1- Introduction and Chapter 2 - History does not cover goals and objectives.

Chapter 3: Cultural Resources and Historic Preservation

Goals and Objectives

The overarching goal is to safeguard the heritage of Summit County by preserving those aspects of our built and natural environments that embody important elements of our culture and history. A secondary goal is to promote the use and conservation of these areas for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of all who visit or live and work in Summit County.

The goals and objectives listed below are intended to assist Summit County and its constituent communities in the recognition and preservation of our heritage. They will guide townships, villages and cities in the preparation of specific local land use goals, priorities and policies to protect, restore and promote their significant historic and cultural resources. The goals and objectives are not listed in order of priority but are considered equally important.

- A. Identify, evaluate and protect historic, scenic and cultural features throughout Summit County.
- B. Encourage individual communities to take ownership and facilitate the preservation of their historic resources.
- C. Recognize and reinforce each community's unique character and identity.
- D. Encourage rehabilitation and preservation of privately and publicly owned buildings and structures.
- E. Establish minimum property maintenance guidelines and standard building codes to encourage and support historic preservation.



- F. Establish the groundwork for adopting or strengthening local historic preservation ordinances.
- G. Increase public awareness and education to enable Summit County residents to discover, understand and preserve their historic places.
- H. Recognize outstanding preservation efforts.
- I. Partner with existing agencies and organizations to share data and resources and coordinate implementation measures.
- J. Assist Summit County communities with heritage tourism and related economic development opportunities.
- K. Position Summit County as a fun, interesting and rewarding place by nourishing arts- and culture-related organizations.

Chapter 5: Housing

Goals and Objectives

Adequate housing is one of the key components of a healthy community, and a critical ingredient in the way a community grows. Therefore, the primary goal of this plan element is to ensure that a range of housing opportunities and choices are available for current and future Summit County residents of all income levels and life stages.

The goals and objectives listed below are intended to assist Summit County and its constituent communities in the pursuit of this goal. They will guide townships, villages and cities in the preparation of specific local housing goals, priorities and policies. The goals and objectives are not listed in order of priority but are considered equally important.

- A. Encourage housing development that supports the principles of smart growth.
- B. Promote the development of a range of housing choices that meet the needs of persons of all income levels, life stages and age groups, as well as for persons with special needs.
- C. Support local planning that identifies essential housing needs with respect to development of new housing and the rehabilitation of existing housing.
- D. Increase the supply of affordable housing for the elderly and non-elderly populations in those areas of the county where need is identified.
- E. Facilitate homeownership.
- F. Increase public awareness about the various homeowner assistance and loan programs available.
- G. Facilitate coordination of housing efforts between local communities and private and public agencies/organizations.
- H. Provide the homeless and those threatened with homelessness with a range of housing options and appropriate supportive services.
- I. Identify and rehabilitate vacant, abandoned or substandard buildings in appropriate locations for housing.



- J. Ensure that new housing is properly and safely constructed.
- K. Ensure the existing housing stock is properly maintained.

Chapter 6: Land Use

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the land use element is that smart growth management techniques should be practiced in the county so as to balance development with the preservation of critical, sensitive areas such as wetlands, floodplains, riparian corridors and prime farmland.

Allowing for higher density development, if coupled with natural resource and open space protection programs, can reduce the impact of the built area on the environment. By concentrating development and people within a smaller geographic area, density reduces land consumption and allows communities to protect valuable open space, habitat, farmland and ecologically sensitive areas.

The Ohio Department of Development's Office of Strategic Planning has projected Summit County to grow by 3.9 % between 2000 and 2030. According to the U.S. Census in 2000, Summit County had a population of 542,899, the Ohio Department of Development's Office of Strategic Planning has projected the Summit County population will be 564,212 in 2030.

- In contrast to the population patterns that have evolved over the last thirty years, the goal for future population distribution is to direct a greater percentage of population growth to areas that are already served by centralized utilities, near existing transportation facilities, and in close proximity to employment centers. Accommodating the same number of housing units on less land enables communities to shift construction away from sensitive areas to areas more suitable for development.
- To conserve resources, reduce initial building costs, and diminish the long range cost of services, greater consideration should be placed on restoring, rehabilitating and reusing existing structures, and finding sites suitable for infill development in locations near existing services.
- Fewer homes should be constructed in outlying locations where urban services are not available.

The objectives listed below are intended to guide townships, villages and cities in the preparation of specific local land use goals, priorities and policies. In addition, the objectives provide a policy framework for county decision making.

Land Use Planning Objectives:

- A. Land should be developed efficiently, keeping in mind that it is a finite resource.
- B. Through local zoning, encourage higher density development in urban centers and villages and maintain lower density in the unincorporated areas.

- C. Zoning resolutions should be in accordance with local land use plans.
- D. Guide commercial and industrial development into areas already zoned for it.
- E. Develop and adopt service area plans as a means to manage existing and future infrastructure improvements.
- F. Encourage the preservation of prime agricultural land.
- G. Encourage the conservation of open space, particularly those areas containing sensitive land such as jurisdictional wetlands, floodplains, river corridors, and woodlands.
- H. Support local zoning based upon a land capability analysis.
- I. Promote tax incentives such as the CAUV, agricultural districts and the forestry program. The Current Agricultural Use Value (CAUV) program allows owners of farmland the opportunity to have their land taxed according to value in agriculture rather than full market value.
- J. Work with local nonprofit land trusts and affected governmental agencies to preserve sensitive land through the acquisition of conservation easements.
- K. Periodically review all county regulations pertaining to development activity.
- L. Update local land use plans on a continuing basis to ensure that such plans and zoning are in harmony. The County Planning Commission may provide technical assistance in guiding communities during the plan update process.

The majority of vacant land left in Summit County is zoned for residential uses. There is a real opportunity to use Smart Growth housing and development options to preserve many of the current existing natural resources and “special places” that define Summit County. Also utilizing these options will promote quality development. The following are the recommended Smart Growth Development Options:

Smart Growth Development Options:

1. **Open space conservation development** – This type of development provides for the same overall densities on a site that would be permitted with the underlying residential zoning but provides for the clustering of the houses in order to preserve a substantial amount of the site in open space (at least 40% - 50% of the total site). This can reduce the cost of providing infrastructure as well. Access to quality open space areas with woodlands, meadows or water courses is incorporated into the design of the open space conservation development. Pedestrian circulation is a primary design objective providing opportunities for passive recreation, such as biking, walking, etc.
2. **Compact development:** This is development that provides for higher intensities or densities of use. Instead of development patterns that are spread out, the Smart Growth movement promotes more compact development patterns which can be compatible with the trend in



smaller household sizes. Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) is a type of neo-traditional mixed use neighborhood design that has implemented these compact building design principles.

3. **Mixed use development:** Mixed use developments are developments that are patterned often after traditional villages, and that usually include a mix of retail, residential and office uses, and pedestrian friendly sidewalks. A mixed use development contains different land uses that are in close proximity, planned as a unified complementary whole, and functionally integrated to the use of shared vehicular and pedestrian access and parking areas. Mixed use developments are often cited as ways to reduce traffic generation, particularly where homes and jobs are planned and developed within easy commuting distance and shopping is located close to residences.

There is a positive relationship between encouraging more compact patterns of development and making it more feasible for mixed use developments to occur. Well designed mixed use developments encourage more walking and less dependence on automobiles.

4. **Transit oriented development:** Transit Oriented Development (TOD) refers to residential and commercial areas designed to maximize access by transit. A TOD neighborhood has a center with a rail or bus station, surrounded by relatively high density development, with progressively lower density spreading outwards. Encouraging compact, denser types of development promotes transit oriented development.
5. **Infill development/ Revitalization of older urbanized areas:** Infill development is the economic use of vacant land in urban areas where water, sewer, and other public improvements and services are in place and available for immediate use. Infill development is one of the main antidotes to suburban sprawl. Infill development tends to be more compact than conventional development patterns, so the same number of dwelling units, stores or offices, takes up much less land.

Chapter 7: Natural Resources

Goals and Objectives

this section of the Natural Resources chapter outlines goals and objectives for natural resource decisions, open space preservation and future planning. The overall goal is to preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas. Open space preservation supports smart growth goals by bolstering local economies, preserving critical environmental areas, and guiding new growth into existing communities.

- A. An overall open space network should be created to conserve and protect important natural resources and to assist in structuring the form of urban development.
- B. Using the Summit County Trails & Greenways Plan as a guide, each community should develop a local plan for linking these areas with sidewalks, bikeways and/or trails.
- C. Promote compact mixed use developments thereby relieving growth pressures on remaining open space.



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- D. Invest in the rural economy to preserve agricultural lands. Encourage local communities to utilize land use tools to protect agricultural land and uses.
- E. Use land management techniques and acquisition to protect drinking water sources. Preserving open space upstream can help protect drinking water resources by filtering out contaminants before they enter the community's water system. Critical areas for water quality protection include wetlands, riparian corridors, and floodplains.
- F. Educate local communities on the need for ground water resource protection based on the new mapping information from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that shows the ground water pollution potential for Summit County. The ground water pollution potential mapping program (DRASTIC) ranks areas with respect to relative vulnerable to ground water contamination.
- G. Preservation of floodplains is an essential component of a good storm water management program. Green infrastructure such as floodplains and wetlands should be preserved because they provide free natural services for flood control.
- H. Encourage the use of low impact design best management practices for better stormwater management, to reduce runoff and increase groundwater recharge.
- I. Protect and preserve environmentally sensitive parklands and open space areas, including critical wildlife habitats for the benefit of future generations.
- J. Make sure the entire County is evenly distributed with parks and recreation opportunities.
- K. Preserve the visual integrity of significant scenic views.

Chapter 8: Utilities & Storm Water Management

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal is to provide for the extension of public utilities to new development in a timely, cost effective, efficient and responsible manner, and to ensure that utility extensions are consistent with the land use plans of individual communities. Public utilities should also be provided in such a manner as to create the least impact upon Summit County's remaining natural resources.

- A. Coordinate land use planning and utility infrastructure planning at local and county levels to ensure growth and development occurs only in locations where it is both suitable and desirable, according to smart growth principles.
 - 1. All utility extensions should be consistent with the land use plans of individual communities.
 - 2. In those communities without land use plans, extension of facilities into undeveloped areas should be avoided to prevent unplanned growth.
- B. Encourage intergovernmental coordination and cooperation in utility extension issues.



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- C. Coordinate and utilize existing plans (i.e. 208 Water Quality Plans, Storm Water Management Programs, and local jurisdiction plans) to maximize efficiency and avoid duplication of efforts.
- D. Plan public utility services to maximize efficiency and cost effectiveness and ensure concurrency wherever possible.
- E. Plan public utility services to support local and county economic development goals.
- F. Protect Summit County water resources, effectively treat sewage disposal, and eliminate private onsite septic systems on lots that have access to central sewer systems to ensure human health and promote water quality.

Chapter 9: Economic Development

Goals & Objectives

This section of the Economic Development chapter outlines goals and objectives for economic decisions and future planning. These goals and objectives are intended to promote stabilization, retention, or expansion of the economic base and quality employment opportunities in Summit County and its communities. They are also intended to encourage, facilitate and support economic development efforts at a local and regional scale.

Economic development involves working together, and reaping the direct and indirect benefits of business retention, expansion, and attraction endeavors. Economic development efforts at the local level benefit the county and region as well as other local communities, and economic development efforts at the county and regional level benefit local communities.

- A. Expand and diversify the Summit County and local tax bases while efficiently using land.
- B. Support the philosophy that Northeast Ohio functions economically as one large region rather than a collection of small, individual economies based on political boundaries.
- C. Utilize incentives to wisely enhance regional economic development.
- D. Formulate local and regional plans to communicate economic development goals and objectives.
- E. Encourage smart growth and sustainable business development best practices.
- F. Encourage communication between businesses, secondary, trade and technical schools, and local colleges and universities to identify necessary employee skills, business development needs and corresponding educational requirements.
- G. Revitalize existing commercial and industrial areas before developing new facilities wherever possible.
- H. Create and/or retain jobs that result in household incomes at or above the area median household income, particularly those jobs that result from government subsidies to business and industry.

Chapter 10: Transportation

Goals & Objectives

This section of the Transportation chapter outlines goals and objectives for transportation decisions and future planning. These goals and objectives are intended to coordinate with the goals and objectives set forth in other chapters of the Summit County General Plan. They are also intended to encourage, facilitate and support transportation improvement efforts at a local and regional scale. This chapter is also intended to complement the more specific plans and recommendations set forth in the AMATS Regional Transportation Plan.

Managing traffic congestion will save time and frustration for residents and employees, limit air pollution, save energy, and allow goods to be moved more efficiently. Providing viable transportation alternatives to driving (i.e., public transportation, walking and biking) will help to limit traffic congestion, and also increase transportation access for those Summit County residents that can't drive or don't want to drive.

The overriding goals are to improve transportation efficiency and transportation options by providing safe, reliable movement of people and goods through intermodal and multimodal transportation systems.

- A. Maintain the existing transportation system.
- B. Manage traffic congestion.
- C. Improve transportation safety.
- D. Increase opportunities to take public transportation, walk, or bicycle
- E. Create hospitable environments for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- F. Move goods efficiently and considerately.
- G. Fix it first! Improve and repair existing roads and highways before building new ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Land Use Development Plan's recommendations are an extension of the vision and goals noted in the prior section, as well as an outgrowth of the Goals and Objectives for each Chapter as listed above.

The following summary is offered for review.

General Recommendations

Redirect and Concentrate Development: The plan seeks to guide future high-density development to the urban centers and villages to reduce the overall amount of land consumed by development. The result will be savings in land otherwise developed, less intra-county sprawl, and reduced public expenditures for infrastructure.

Encourage Economic Development: The need for a strong and diverse local economy should be recognized as integral to the plan. Economic considerations should be integrated into the various elements of the plan.

Plan for Future Parks Needs: Preserve open space that can be used and developed for passive and active recreational opportunities. As the county develops there will be a need for more park and community facilities.

Utilize more Innovative Development Patterns: It is recommended that communities develop plans which integrate "smart growth" principles in all development programs to increase opportunities for walking, bicycling and transit use. Create transportation options by mixing development and land uses within existing downtowns and new town centers. Make positive public health impacts a priority in land-use planning and development decision making. Utilize innovative development patterns such as open space conservation development, compact and mixed use development and transit oriented development design. Coordinate thoroughfare planning in harmony with desired land use patterns.

Coordinate Infrastructure Expansion: The relationship between water and sewer service extension and land use development patterns must be coordinated to implement Smart Growth principles.

Specific Objectives

The planning process is dynamic and on going. The next phase of the comprehensive planning process will concentrate on specific plans for three crucial elements needed to control and direct growth:

- 1). Sewer system infrastructure expansion and extension
- 2). County thoroughfare planning
- 3). County open space plan



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Sewer System Planning: Develop goals, objectives, priorities and strategies for sewer system expansion and infrastructure extension as a guide to future land use development in cooperation with the Summit County Department of Environmental Services.

County Thoroughfare Plan: Assist the Summit County Engineer to develop a County Thoroughfare Plan which designates road classifications, right of way and access management in harmony with desired land use patterns.

Open Space Planning: In the General Plan's Natural Resource Chapter there are areas that are identified as being ecologically important within the County. More work should be done to identify these and other significant natural resource areas as part of developing an overall Open Space Plan for the County.