

# ***LAND USE OBJECTIVES***



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
SUMMARY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN	2
USE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN	3
LAND USE OBJECTIVES	4
HOUSING	6
<i>Overall Goal for Housing Development</i>	6
<i>Principles for Housing Development</i>	6
<i>Standards to Facilitate Housing Development</i>	6
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Commercial/Industrial Uses)	7
<i>Overall Goal for Economic Development</i>	7
<i>Principles for Economic Development</i>	7
PUBLIC FACILITIES	9
<i>Overall Goals for Public Facilities</i>	9
<i>Principles for Public Facilities and Utilities</i>	9
<i>Standards to Facilitate Public Facilities and Utilities</i>	10



# ***INTRODUCTION***



## **INTRODUCTION**

A Comprehensive Land Use Plan guides future activities by providing a framework for public officials to make decisions. The Plan contains policies to provide for the harmonious and economical arrangement of land uses, the stabilization of investments and land values, and the development of needed public facilities. To fulfill this purpose, the Plan must be both functional and flexible. As an aid to the reader, the following areas of implementation are highlighted:

1. The Comprehensive Land Use Plan serves as: (1) a source of information; (2) a program for future growth patterns, as shown in the Future Land Use Map; (3) a device for coordination; and (4) a means for stimulating public interest and responsibility.
2. This Plan contains policies or recommendations for the preparation of new and/or revised enforcement tools, such as zoning and subdivision ordinances.
3. This Plan bears an important relationship to the administration of land use ordinances. It should serve as a guide in the determination of zoning amendments, the consideration of proposed subdivisions, and the location of proposed public improvements.
4. In reviewing any zoning change, the Plan must be consulted to determine whether the proposal conforms to established patterns. If conflicts exist, a discussion ensues regarding the pros and cons of the proposed change as it relates to established policy, goals, and objectives. The final result is either approval of the proposed change and an amendment to the Plan, or the rejection of the proposed change.

Plan flexibility is maintained by keeping a general theme, but the Plan provides a stable and reliable base for officials to determine public and private development policy and action. To remain reliable and realistic, the Plan must be adapted to reflect changes, not only in the physical layout of the County (its buildings, pavements and land areas), but also in the needs, values and means to carry out the Plan. As the County grows, as population increases, as new technologies develop, and as the people's interests and modes of living change, the Plan must be revised to reflect these changes.





***SUMMARY OF THE  
COMPREHENSIVE  
LAND USE PLAN***



## **SUMMARY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN**

To guide orderly development of the County, the Plan outlines objectives to be used by officials in making decisions regarding zoning, land use planning, and subdivision development.

The land use policy objectives to be used for Mitchell County are as follows:

1. To preserve, protect and enhance property values through land use locations that complement each other rather than providing conflicts;
2. To improve the environment and stimulate individual creativity;
3. To provide maximum diversity and choice of location;
4. To coordinate land use with transportation facilities;

With the above objectives in mind, the Plan then outlines the following implementation steps:

1. By outlining policy in terms of common objectives to be sought by each type of development;
2. By listing accepted principles which must be applied to fulfill these common objectives;
3. By designating the most appropriate locations for agricultural, residential, industrial, and commercial development;
4. By providing a mechanism for incorporating the input of communities into land use decisions that are within their "zones of influence";
5. By delineating circulation facilities needed to provide access to all parts of the area that provide for safe and efficient movements of people and goods;
6. By pointing out flood hazard areas and appropriate means to limit developments within these areas;
7. By specifying general locations of recreation areas and other public facilities.



***USE OF THE  
COMPREHENSIVE  
LAND USE PLAN***



## USE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

Preparation and adoption of a plan are two essential steps toward assuring sound development of the County. While preparation and adoption are essential, they are not by themselves sufficient to assure sound development because the Plan merely provides a basis for guiding and coordinating future development. Therefore, the Plan's most important function is its role as a guide for the development of enforcement mechanisms of zoning and subdivision regulation. The Plan's value to these devices is that it:

Forces a long-range consideration when reviewing land use options. That is, when zoning changes are proposed that do not conform to the Future Land Use Plan, a discussion must ensue as to the long-term pros and cons of the proposed change. From this discussion, the County can then document the justification for either approving or denying the change.

Remains somewhat flexible as a variety of future development patterns are programmed. It does not specify the exact detail of how the County should grow, but suggests the broad objectives, principles, and standards which should be followed in future development.

Unlike the Comprehensive Land Use Plan, specific development plans, codes, ordinances, and utility studies go into far greater detail. This Plan, however, is based on knowledge, review of, and consideration of the following:

1. Physical features and natural resources of Mitchell County.
2. Economic factors and labor force.
3. Population trends.
4. Public facilities and transportation factors.
5. Visioning discussions.
6. Community and Economic Development Strategic Plan - 1991.
7. Community Builder Plan - 1997.





# ***LAND USE OBJECTIVES***



## LAND USE OBJECTIVES

Based upon the existing land use, the role of non-farm dwellings and other urban-type developments within the rural area of the County are found to exist and will be controlled as follows:

Non-farm uses have been, and will continue to be, an important aspect of the County's land use pattern. There is no reason that they be totally eliminated, but some location criteria should be applied. In considering future land use patterns, agriculture deserves the same type of protection from non-farm uses as non-farm uses desire from agriculture. Therefore, the concept of development areas (or zones) where non-farm uses could be expected to locate should be utilized; the County should also consider defined agricultural areas where farming would be the primary desired use, not subject to intrusion by non-farm land use types.

Within development zones (defined as areas along major rivers and tributaries and adjacent to communities) the following should be considered:

- a) Within areas zoned for development (residential, commercial, and industrial), lot areas would be permitted, provided they are located within organized subdivisions. Outside of platted subdivisions, larger minimum lot requirements should be utilized.
- b) Development within recognized flood hazard areas, as defined by FEMA, must adhere to the County's flood hazard programs.

Outside of development zones:

- a) Large acres of land should be required before a non-farm use would be permitted. This large acreage would discourage, through financial considerations, small lot operations from locating within these zones.
- b) Non-farm dwellings (commercial and industrial uses should be more restricted) may be located outside of development zones on larger parcels, provided that the site is an abandoned farmstead. Abandoned farmstead would be defined as a site that once housed a farm dwelling, where row crop or grazing agriculture has not reclaimed the home site, some trees are still present, and some outbuildings are still present.

The County has a number of rural subdivisions. This practice is not deemed to be negative, but in locating such developments the County should consider:

- Will the soils support a concentration of septic tanks and private wells?
- Will the subdivision substantially increase traffic on adjacent roads, and if so, can the road surfaces accommodate the traffic without major upgrading? Will the developer provide black-top roads, and have covenants been put in place to assure maintenance if County ownership of the road is not achieved?

- Will the subdivision be compatible with adjacent land use patterns?
- Within the surrounding area, are there physical features, such as the presence of a major road or railroad, that could attract land use types that would be counter productive to the subdivision?
- Is the subdivision located on prime agricultural land or within one of several development corridors?
- Have neighboring communities been consulted regarding the location of the subdivision?

The County should contract with cities in the County, when requested, to provide professional administration of a two-mile jurisdictional area through Chapter 28E, Code of Iowa. This would allow cities to directly utilize control over adjacent lands which are a critical part of their future development.

Value added agriculture is also an important consideration in land use planning; however, it has distinctive characteristics also.

1. County policies should be developed that respect the rights of agriculture as well as non-agricultural uses. That is, agriculture should be provided with definite zones in which the location of non-agricultural uses are severely restricted.
2. Site distance clearances should be provided from the animal confinements to the nearest neighbors. The distances should vary according to the number of animals within the confinement.
3. The confinement should provide a manure waste disposal plan that reflects the capacity of the soil to adequately accept and assimilate the manure as nutrients for future crops.
4. Consideration should be given to assure that large confinements are located in proximity to quality roads.
5. A buffer zone should be placed around each city and along the river corridors and major tributaries.
6. Value-added agricultural uses should be located only when specific characteristics exist which are not available on other sites within the County and when conflicts can be adequately mitigated.

# ***HOUSING***



## HOUSING

### Overall Goal for Housing Development

The overall housing development goal is to preserve and create living areas that are compact and identifiable, offering overall security and affording freedom of choice for types of residential dwellings, social opportunities, and creative individual living.

### Principles for Housing Development

Residential growth should be channeled to development zones and the use of subdivisions encouraged. New residential subdivisions are discouraged, unless as an expansion of current residential areas or as part of a larger planned complex. This arrangement would provide the least conflict with expanding agricultural enterprises. Non-farm dwellings outside of the development zones should be discouraged, unless the site is an abandoned farmstead.

Rural housing within subdivisions in residentially zoned areas and on existing farmsteads should be single-family. The more intensive multi-family uses should be prohibited because of increased traffic and general lack of utility services in the predominately rural area.

### Standards to Facilitate Housing Development

Through the zoning administrative process, the County Future Land Use Map should reflect a targeting of non-farm land uses to development zones. Concepts for this strategy are:

- Outline around each incorporated city a development zone with a radius of approximately one-half mile, more or less. Within these zones the County would encourage planned developments, subject to the normal location factors of infrastructure, provision of highway access and the need to avoid "string" type developments, and sound separation of urban land use types.
- Outline development zones along the rivers and streams or other woodland areas.
- Outside of the development zones, the presence of non-farm uses should be discouraged through tools such as large lot zoning and prohibition of subdivision. The exception would be the location of a non-farm dwelling on an abandoned farmstead. Abandoned farmsteads would be defined as a site that once housed a farm dwelling, where row crop or grazing agriculture has not reclaimed the home site, some trees are still present, and some outbuildings are still present.
- Within the development zones around each incorporated city, the zoning administrative process should permit the incorporated city to comment on each request for a subdivision and zoning change or give authority to each city via 28E Agreements.





***ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
(Commercial/Industrial Uses)***



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (Commercial/Industrial Uses)**

### **Overall Goal for Economic Development**

The overall economic development goal is to provide an adequate supply of land for economic development. Conversely, an effort will be made to avoid the blighting of land as the result of allowing sporadic commercial and industrial development in residential areas. Specific subgoals for accomplishment are:

Encourage a maximum utilization of existing Community/Commercial Districts and Industrial Parks through the promotion and establishment of healthy, stable commercial/industrial concentrations.

Assure the inclusion of adequate public services and facilities to existing commercial and industrial areas.

Prevent the encroachment by commercial and industrial uses upon residential and agricultural areas.

### **Principles for Economic Development**

New commercial/industrial developments should be in the form of unified and concentrated planned developments. Spot development in residential neighborhoods and the stringing out of development along roads should be discouraged.

Prior to the establishment of zoning for commercial/industrial centers, road rights-of-way should be of sufficient width to ensure adequate circulation in the vicinity. New establishments, either individually or collectively, should be required to assure traffic safety by providing safe, convenient access, adequate off-street parking and loading facilities for pedestrians and customer and service vehicles. Frontage roads should be provided along major arterials.

Existing commercial areas should be encouraged and assisted to the fullest extent possible in correcting any deficiencies to assure traffic safety and convenience.

Any adverse influences resulting from commercial/industrial activities upon adjacent non-commercial areas should be minimized by appropriate buffers such as physical screens and use of open space.

Availability of public utilities, including power, water, fuel, and waste disposal, should determine the type and extent of industrial activities that can be supported.

Industrial areas should be protected from the encroachment of incompatible land uses which would restrict plant development.

Local development efforts should include a strategy for working with entrepreneurs within existing vacant buildings.

The location of industrial areas in the land use pattern should first be determined by external performance characteristics such as noise, vibration, smoke, odor, radiation, heat, glare, and other objectionable influences.

The number, height, size, and placement of billboards and signs should be regulated in industrial areas with consideration for amenity within the development and adjoining areas.

All open areas used for storage or production should be screened so as to enhance adjacent land uses.

Recognize tourism as economic development.

# ***PUBLIC FACILITIES***



## **PUBLIC FACILITIES**

### **Overall Goals for Public Facilities**

1. To make available facilities and services which are necessary for the public well-being. To develop and expand the quality and quantity of facilities and utilities to adequately meet the needs of a growing population. To recognize the role that quality facilities and utilities play in fostering positive attitudes.
2. To provide each citizen with choices for the types and amounts of recreational activities desired. To coordinate with State, Federal and County programs to ensure the most effective utilization of public and private recreational funds. To preserve resources that have special historical, scientific, scenic, or recreational value.
3. To develop and maintain a transportation system which is planned, located, and designed to enhance the efficiency of movement of both people and goods, and which supports and promotes all areas of the County.

### **Principles for Public Facilities and Utilities**

#### **Recreation:**

1. Those areas having terrain unsuitable for development should be maintained as part of the open space plan.
2. Encourage the development of recreational trails.

#### **Surface Water and Storm Drainage**

1. Principal watersheds and their drainage courses should be protected against encroachment by incompatible uses.
2. Land subject to inundation should be utilized for parks and recreation, utility easements, wildlife refuges, and other uses which suffer little damage from occasional inundation.

#### **Roadways**

1. Traffic ways should be attractively landscaped and their appearance planned to beautify, identify, and unify land use areas as desirable patterns of living.
2. Traffic way planning and improvement should be correlated with the planning and development of other elements of the County, including public utilities, public facilities, commercial and industrial areas.

#### **Public Facilities**

1. Continue to upgrade the quality of service provided for the County by both expansion and remodeling of existing facilities.

### Utilities

1. Monitor current needs and make regular assessments as to the adequacy of each system. Regularly update the existing detailed engineering studies. Schedule the needs into timely replacement programs.

### **Standards to Facilitate Public Facilities and Utilities**

Review existing roads in regard to determining whether roads may be closed or converted to a minimal maintenance status.

Implement a roadway improvement program as determined.

Continue a well-rounded recreation program and area development.