



Chapter 4: Issues and Goals

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The 1993 City Comprehensive Plan was organized around the several issues that were identified for consideration in the Plan (Table 1.31, pg. 1-7):

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Housing and Neighborhoods
- Environmental Issues
- Economic Development Issues
- Community Facilities
- Cultural Resources

These main headings were used for initial discussions regarding the planning for the Little Blue Valley. Both the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Little Blue Valley Steering Committee (LBVSC) developed issues, goals and objectives statements regarding these headings. Throughout the course of the public participation process, these were reorganized and distilled into six (6) major plan elements as follows:

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Community Facilities and Services
- Utilities and Infrastructure
- Environmental and Cultural Resources
- Economic Development

A series of specific goals was developed for each of these plan elements. The alternatives presented as part of this study incorporate these goals which serve as benchmarks to evaluate the plan alternatives under consideration. Following selection of a preferred Concept Plan, each goal was supplemented with recommended policies and actions to implement the

The goal setting process established a basis for both evaluation of Plan Alternatives and crafting the Plan to accomplish specific objectives. For example one goal is to create additional City revenues. Evaluation of the Plan revealed that the tax base created by development following the Plan would be greater than the tax base required to maintain the Plan Area. Thus creating excess revenues to be used in other parts of the City.

selected vision. Ultimately, these policies and actions will become part of the City's Comprehensive Plan, along with changes to the Land Use Map and Thoroughfare Plan.

The following is a summary of the goals for the Little Blue Valley organized by each Plan element and related critical issues identified during the public participation process.

4.A Land Use



Existing industrial development within the Little Blue Valley

Designating future land uses is the most tangible and easily understood feature of comprehensive plans. The Land Use section of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment includes a land use map directing future development of the Little Blue Valley. This map will be the most familiar part of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, but it is by no means the only land use policy statement in the plan. The Plan Amendment will also include definitions and standards for each of the land use designations or categories shown on the plan as well as a series of general goals, and specific policies and actions to guide decisions concerning land use, development, and environmental protection in the Little Blue Valley.

The most critical land use goals the Plan Amendment will address are: balanced growth, mixed-use development opportunities, community design, integration and enhancement of existing development and agricultural preservation.

4.A.1 Balanced Growth

4.A.1.1 Secure a compatible mix of land uses at appropriate levels of intensity that results in a balance of economic development and housing opportunities in the Little Blue Valley.

4.A.1.2 Carefully phase development to maintain this balance over time to make the most effective use of available infrastructure; generate adequate revenues and pace growth

to the City's ability to deliver appropriate levels of service.

4.A.2 *Mixed Use Development*

4.A.2.1 Establish zoning regulations, where appropriate, that integrate, rather than segregate, different land uses and intensities of development in order to achieve balanced growth.

4.A.2.2 Use Town Center or Village Center concepts to make integration of uses logical and cost-effective through sharing of buildings, infrastructure or open space.

4.A.2.3 Use mixed use development to encourage transition between areas zoned for differing types of uses.

4.A.3 *Community Design*

4.A.3.1 Create an attractive and efficient built environment that promotes safety, harmony and community stability.

4.A.3.2 Protect and enhance property values through design guidelines that demand high quality design.

4.A.3.3 Use development guidelines in mixed-use centers to foster a strong community identity and create a unique visual image shared by the different residential, employment, retail commercial, open space, and recreation uses.

4.A.3.4 Encourage a wide variety of housing types, styles, price ranges and ownership from starter homes to executive homes to enable all economic and demographic segments of the community to live in the Little Blue Valley.

4.A.3.5 Strengthen local community identity by establishing focal points including



The bike lane enhancement to the Little Blue Parkway bridge over I-70 are a good example of quality community design (under construction)

Village Centers and a Town Center that provide for a variety of commercial, social, and recreational needs.

4.A.3.6 Provide each residential neighborhood with its own local open space as well as creating a community wide-open space network.

4.A.4 *Integration with Independence*

4.A.4.1 Create a unique community in the Little Blue Valley while maintaining strong physical connections with the remainder of Independence.

4.A.4.2 Promote development in the Little Blue Valley that will generate enhanced revenues that can contribute to better services and a better quality of life for all residents of Independence.

4.A.5 *Enhancement of Existing Development*

4.A.5.1 Encourage new development, expansion of open space and recreation facilities that will have a positive effect on existing residential, commercial, and industrial areas in the Little Blue Valley.



Agricultural development in eastern Independence

4.A.6 *Agricultural Preservation*

4.A.6.1 Protect agricultural operations where property owners choose to continue production through right-to-farm legislation and land use and zoning policies such as requiring new development to provide sufficient buffers between agricultural operations and new developments.

4.A.6.2 Encourage innovative approaches such as rural clustering to allow incremental development of agricultural land while checking tendencies to low density sprawl.

4.A.6.3 Integrate viable agricultural land as a design element in neighborhood and open space plans where possible.

4.B. Transportation

The Transportation element of the amended Comprehensive Plan must support the land use policies for the Little Blue Valley. Access to and circulation within the Little Blue Valley will have significant impacts on land use potential and site planning possibilities. Especially important is the final alignment and design of the LBP.

The transportation policies for Little Blue Valley must also establish an efficient local system of roads and streets and accommodate the needs of bicyclists and pedestrians. The design of this local transportation network will have a profound influence on the visual and environmental quality of the local neighborhoods and the Village Centers and Town Center.

4.B.1 Little Blue Parkway (LBP)

4.B.1.1 Design, fund, and develop the LBP as the major transportation facility in the Little Blue Valley. Design the physical appearance of the roadway to establish high standards for adjacent land uses.

4.B.1.2 Accommodate through traffic as part of the regional road network while providing efficient access to development centers within the Little Blue Valley as determined by traffic analysis and/or physical site conditions. Traffic analysis must consider full build-out projections.

4.B.1.3 Encourage public-private partnerships supplemental to or in place of state and federal funding (if any) to expedite completion of the Little Blue Parkway.



Future alignment of the Little Blue Parkway north of Necessary Road

4.B.2 Secondary Roads

4.B.2.1 Coordinate road planning and design with planning for adjacent land uses; avoid poor frontage image such as that of most strip commercial environments.



Crenshaw Road just north of Strode Road will become an important secondary road

4.B.2.2 Minimize potential bottlenecks; provide sufficient alternative access points to collectors and arterials by use of grid networks in addition to cul-de-sacs and courts.

4.B.2.3 Review existing road design standards to reduce paved areas and support landscape features that improve the visual appearance of neighborhoods and centers.

4.B.2.4 Utilize traffic calming techniques to encourage appropriate speeds on secondary and neighborhood streets.

4.B.2.5 Minimize conflicts between industrial/business and residential traffic. Insure employment nodes have efficient access to the regional arterial road network without impinging on residential neighborhoods.

4.B.3 Public Transportation

4.B.3.1 Promote public transit opportunities including bus rapid transit and commuter rail possibilities to make the Little Blue Valley more accessible to the rest of the City and the region as a whole.

4.B.4 Pedestrian/Bicycle Routes

4.B.4.1 Connect Little Blue Valley bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways with City trails, METROBIKE trails, and the local street network.

4.B.5 Air Transportation

4.B.5.1 Examine the potential for air transportation to foster and support the economic development potential of the Little Blue Valley.

4.B.5.2 Examine the current and future potential of the proposed Independence/Eastern Jackson County Airport north of 24 Highway.

4.C Community Facilities and Services

The quality of life in a community stems, in large part, from the quality of public facilities and services available to its residents, workers, and visitors. For development in the Little Blue Valley to become a valuable addition to Independence and a viable competitor in the regional real estate market, the City must provide efficient, high quality facilities and services.

4.C.1 Education

4.C.1.1 Explore intergovernmental agreements among the various school districts to allow consolidated schools and /or programs.

4.C.1.2 Plan for the development of community centers, libraries, schools, and public safety facilities. Develop joint use public facilities or buildings, and make them a feature of the Village Centers and Town Center development programs. Use a portion of the development savings to enhance the facilities aesthetically.

4.C.1.3 Create a well-educated, labor-ready community with access to opportunities for continuing education and professional development.

4.C.1.4 Establish at least one branch of a higher education institution (four year and



The Independence School
District Bridger 7th Grade Center

graduate degrees) in the Little Blue Valley. (This facility would be in addition to and complimentary to, not in competition with, the Blue Valley Community College.)



Entrance to the George Owens Nature Center

4.C.2 Parks and Recreation

4.C.2.1 Promote development of a high-quality open space and recreational system.

4.C.2.2 Provide linkages with the remainder of Independence through greenbelts and greenways, linkages to adjacent neighborhoods, and linkages across the Little Blue River.

4.C.2.3 Provide a balance between public and private recreational facilities and services.

4.D Utilities and Infrastructure

A community's utilities and infrastructure, when provided efficiently, are largely invisible to their users. The following goals establish a framework to ensure that the basic infrastructure necessary to service new development in the Little Blue Valley is efficient, and, thus, invisible.

4.D.1 Water Supply and Quality

4.D.1.1 Protect the quality of the groundwater supply. Prohibit future groundwater contamination and monitor ongoing cleanups.

4.D.1.2 Ensure an adequate supply of water to support development in the Little Blue Valley.

4.D.2 Sewer Treatment and Capacity

4.D.2.1 Phase in adequate wastewater/sewage treatment capacity to accommodate all planned industrial, commercial, and residential growth.

4.D.3 *Electric Service and Other Overhead Utilities*

4.D.3.1 Plan for and maintain adequate power supplies and distribution facilities for future growth.

4.D.3.2 Minimize the aesthetic impacts of overhead facilities.

4.D.4 *Smart Community*

4.D.4.1 Incorporate high technology information and communication infrastructure in all new Little Blue Valley development.

4.D.5 *Gas Service*

4.D.5.1 Work with Missouri Gas Energy to plan and expand gas service sequenced with other major utilities.

4.E *Environmental and Cultural Resources*

The Little Blue Valley is blessed with rich environmental qualities that are the basis of its natural beauty and ability to attract new development. Only through attention to maintaining a balance between the natural environment and new development will the City attract the high-end development it seeks for the Little Blue Valley.



The Little Blue Trace north of Truman Road

4.E.1 *Environmental Stewardship*

4.E.1.1 Protect valuable natural and environmental resources through use of open space requirements, environmental overlays, conservation easements, land dedications, and cluster development.

4.E.2 *Flood Plains and Stream Valley Environments*

4.E.2.1 Protect and enhance flood plains while accommodating growth. Develop new

regulations that specifically address the use of properties adjacent to streams and flood plains.

4.E.2.2 Enhance and expand the Little Blue Trace.

4.E.3 Cultural and Historic Resources

4.E.3.1 Develop a cultural legacy to be enjoyed by current and future generations.

4.E.3.2 Preserve special archeological, historical and geological features.

4.E.3.3 Include historic and cultural resources review in the planning development process.

4.F Economic Development



Entrance to the existing Airport Industrial Park

The future of the Little Blue Valley and all of Independence is inextricably tied to the City's success in developing its economy. Although the city is unable to control overall regional market demand, it can capture its fair share of regional economic opportunities. The following goals are those that the city of Independence in collaboration with its residents, property owners, and the business community must achieve in order to improve the future prospects of its local economy.

4.F.1 Business and Industrial Base

4.F.1.1 Make the Little Blue Valley a premier location within the region to live, work, play, gather and worship.

4.F.1.2 Attract high-quality new businesses and high technology industries along with commercial activity to broaden the city's property and sales tax base.

4.F.1.3 Support collaboration between business and schools to develop training and mentoring programs

4.F.1.4 Identify and encourage the incorporation of distinctive retail uses in the Little Blue Valley in general, and the Town Center development in particular, to ensure that a broader base of retail concepts are available to shoppers and that the retail base located in the 39th Street corridor is not replicated nor jeopardized.

4.F.1.5 Identify and promote the appropriate residential, office and other business uses for the Little Blue Valley and more specifically, the Town Center development located near the intersection of Truman Road and Little Blue Parkway.

4.F.1.6 Determine the trade area and market potential for residential, retail, office, and other commercial development uses.

4. F.2 Tourism

Consider appropriate tourist activities and venues.

The Little Blue Valley offers several potential tourist attractions



- Civil War Battlefields and historic markers
- Historic homes
- Native American archeological sites