Chapter 5: Concept Plan Alternatives

Chapter 5: Concept Plan Alternatives

This section outlines several plan alternatives that were developed in the course of the study process. From the community input and the goals and objectives that were established, several common themes emerged that helped form the basis for the new alternatives.

5.A Common Themes

5.A.1 Linkage with the Existing Community: Future development in the eastern part of Independence must be related strongly, both physically and socially, to the rest of the community. The public at the various workshops conducted as part of the Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Update process resoundingly affirmed this priority . Consequently, all alternatives to the present Comprehensive Plan identify Truman Road, redesigned as a boulevard, as the central link between the Square - the heart of historic Independence - with a new Town Center. While the location of the new Town Center and the alignment of the upgraded Truman Boulevard differ slightly in each alternative, their function is the same - to link the present with the future.

Other important east-west linkages include R.D. Mize Road, M-78, Bundschu Road, and U.S. 24 Highway. While they also provide important connections to the Little Blue Valley, they will not have the same symbolic importance as Truman Boulevard.

5.A.2 Distinct Community Focal Points: As in most major metropolitan areas in the United States, Kansas City suburban communities have developed without strong focal points, identity or community centers. The City of Independence is strongly determined to avoid this typical pattern of characterless sprawling development, returning to neighborhood oriented designs. New focal points should link to the quality history of Independence such as Harry Truman, the westward expansion trails or the Civil War.

Five Common Themes of the Concept Plan Alternatives

1. **Linkage with the existing community**
2. **Distinct community focal points**
3. **Mixed use development**
4. **Cluster development principles**
5. **Open space network**

Cluster development diagram

5.A.2.1 Town Center: The alternatives presented here establish a strong physical community identity by focusing Little Blue Valley development on a well-defined Town Center. The Town Center will be the key commercial, residential and civic focus for eastern Independence and is intended to accommodate mixed-use development of detailed, high quality architecture, community oriented open space and pedestrian friendly streets. The Town Center concept combines a variety of places to work, live, shop, play, gather and worship; all linked by a convenient, pedestrian-oriented transportation network. Because of its importance as a civic focal point, the initial development of this center should include defined public service facilities and gathering places (e.g. post office, community center, library, public plaza, park).

The design of the Town Center will emphasize pedestrian needs in addition to accommodating automobiles. Design elements such as narrow streets, shallow building setbacks, pedestrian-scale architectural features, and parking located between or behind buildings are some of the site planning features that will create a pleasing and urban environment.

Higher density residential development is planned at Sterling Village to integrate with lower density areas surrounding the development site. Similar strategies may be employed in the Little Blue Valley.

5.A.2.2 Residential Villages: Under each alternative, the more intensely developed portions of the study area are conceived as a series of residential villages. These villages include a mixture of housing types (i.e., single-family homes, apartments, condominium, assisted living facilities) at a variety of price ranges to serve the needs of a diverse mix of families, young adults, empty nesters, and seniors. This housing will include both ownership and rental units.

The villages will also include local street networks that are well connected and accommodate pedestrian and bicycle travel as well as the automobile. These village qualities, especially the pedestrian-oriented physical planning and architectural design, will distinguish residential development in the Little Blue Valley from most other suburban communities in the Kansas City area.

Each of the residential villages will contain a principal focal point or Village Center. These Village Centers will likely feature a variety of small commercial, employment, or civic uses. It is also recommended that future schools locate within or adjacent to the Village Centers.

5.A.3 Mixed-Use Development: Another common suburban trait that the City of Independence seeks to avoid is the isolation of commercial and business uses from residential development as well as in separating various densities and types of residential development. In contrast, the alternatives for Little Blue Valley all include some form of mixed-use-development as a key ingredient in a planned community that fosters efficient land use, environmental protection and healthy social interaction.

Segregation of land uses typical of the classic commercial strip requires even those living adjacent to the development to get in their car and drive around the block.

Mixed use is absolutely essential within the designated Town Center and Village Centers. It is also recommended that the City consider new mixed-use zoning districts - Mixed Use Development (MXD) and a Planned Community District (PCD). The mixed-use designations would allow commercial, recreational and residential uses of various densities to locate together within specified planned areas. These zones may establish criteria for minimum and maximum percentage coverage of each use to ensure achieving a true mix of uses occurs and/or establish performance measures to assure compatibility.

5.A.4 Cluster Development Principles: Cluster development is generally defined as a close grouping of homes on the most buildable portions of a site while, at the same time, preserving a large portion of the parcel (including environmentally sensitive areas) as undeveloped open space. The early demonstrations of clustering, including the greenbelt towns, featured attached homes or townhouses that enabled developers and builders to achieve highly compact development yet reserve the maximum amount of land for open space and community use.

The rationale for cluster development is grounded in environmental and economic concerns. When

Cluster development techniques can be used to preserve open space networks and decrease the per lot cost of development

clustering is permitted, homes are designed on small homesites and on that portion of the land parcel that can be developed with the least disturbance. At the same time, developers realize significant savings because shorter roads and utility extensions are required to serve the clustered homes. By scaling the roads appropriately, developers control or eliminate through traffic, creating a safe and comfortable environment for residential development.

The advantages of clustering can be achieved at any scale – from a few homes on several acres of land up to large-scale planned unit developments (PUDs) and new towns.

5.A.5 Open Space Network: The eastern part of Independence is blessed with a very attractive natural environment. The Little Blue Valley's gently rolling topography combines with the Little Blue River to make the area one of the highest quality development opportunities in the Kansas City metropolitan area.

The City of Independence understands that these environmental and landscape assets are delicate and must be cared for properly to retain their natural value and attract the desired high quality development to Little Blue Valley. Accordingly, all alternative development scenarios include a well-connected, high-quality open space network. Such a network will serve three purposes: 1) protecting the valuable natural qualities that give the Valley a unique community asset, 2) providing City residents access to active and passive recreation, and 3) incorporating alternative means of transportation with its network of pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails.

5.B Distinguishing Features of the Plan Alternatives

The common themes described above set the basic ground rules for development of the Little Blue Valley. Nevertheless, the alternatives presented differ in three key respects:

- The overall mix and distribution of proposed land use.
- The location and scale of development centers.
- The roadway network and access to proposed development sites.

For descriptive purposes, the Study Area is divided into four quadrants, with the Little Blue River as the main North-South axis and the Truman Road-M78 corridor as the main East-West axis.

5.C Market Assumptions

While the City can create the basic land use framework for future development in the Little Blue Valley, the amount, type, and pace of development will depend largely on regional market forces. As part of the Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Planning process, the City commissioned a market overview study to determine the share of expected regional growth that Little Blue Valley could capture through the years 2020 and 2040. Table 1 summarizes these estimates.

TABLE 1: 2020 ABSORPTION ASSUMPTIONS*
Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment

RESIDENTIAL		DUS**	Residents	Acreage
	TOTAL	**7,100**	**20,000**	**1,775**
EMPLOYMENT		S.F.**	Employees	Acreage
Retail		350,000	875	35
Office Park		700,000	2,333	65
Industrial Park		2,000,000	1,333	185
	TOTAL	**3,050,000**	**4,541**	**285**

*Source: Development Strategies Incorporated, June 1998.
**Based on Floor Area Ratios of 0.25
Note: DUS = Housing Units

5.D Holding Capacity

Holding Capacity Calculation

$$(T - (U + R) = N$$

$$N * D = H$$

Where:

T = Total Land Area
U = Undevelopable Land
R = Rights-Of-Way
N = Net Acreage
D = Development Density
H = Holding Capacity

The projections and calculations of employment and housing for each of the plan alternatives begin with assumptions about the **holding capacity** of various land use categories. Holding capacity is a measure of the amount of development, nonresidential square feet or residential development units, an area of land can adequately support based on the comprehensive plan. The total vacant acreage (gross acreage) designated for a specific land use is never fully developed. Land zoned for low density housing, at 2 dwelling units/acre for example, never results in exactly 2.0 units per acre. Numerous development requirements such as rights-of-way dedications for roads and utilities, open space or environmental requirements such a flood plain restrictions reduce the amount of land (net acreage) that the designated land use such as housing units will actually occupy.

To insure that future development of vacant land in the Little Blue Valley is not overestimated, a holding capacity factor is applied to the total (gross) acreage for most land use categories in each alternative.

For residential categories, net developable land was assumed to be 80% of the total vacant acres available. For example, if 4,500 gross acres are available for medium density housing, the net acreage will be 4,500 acres x 0.80 = 3,600 acres.

Once the net acreage is determined, an "assumed density" – the average yield per net acre for each land use category – is applied to calculate the probable cumulative buildout for each type of land use. For example, the assumed density for medium density residential is 4.0 to 5.0 dwelling units/acre. Applied to the net acreage in the example above, the cumulative yield would be a range of 14,400 units (3,600 acres X 4.0 units/acre) to 18,000 units (3,600 acres x 5.0 units/acre).

For employment land (see Table 3 1993 comprehensive Plan designations: Commercial, Regional Commercial, Office, Business Park, Light Industrial, Industrial Park), a holding

capacity of 85% is assumed. This percentage is higher than the residential holding capacity primarily because employment land uses usually have decreased setback requirements proportional to the total acreage and more square feet of development per acre.

TABLE 2: DEVELOPMENT DENSITY			
Residential	**Lot Size**	**Dwelling Units (DU)**	**Compatible Zoning**
Ag / Rural Residential	3 acre min.	<0.2 DU / Ac	A-1
Estate Residential	20,000 sq.ft. -5 acres	0.2 -1.5 DU / Ac	RE, RE cluster
Low Residential	10,900 - 37,000 sq.ft.	1.5 -3.0 DU / Ac	R-1, R-1 cluster, R-1a
Low/Medium Residential	6,000 - 13,000 sq.ft.	3.0 -7.0 DU / Ac	R-1a cluster, R-1b, R-1b cluster
Medium Residential		7.0 -14.0 DU/ Ac	R-2, R-2 cluster, R-3
High Residential		>14.0 DU/ Ac	R-3, R-4
Non-Residential		**Floor Area Ratio**	
Retail		0.2 to 0.3	

* Based on a net acre exclusive of rights-of-way, open space and other public areas

NOTE: Table 2 applies to this Comprehensive Plan Amendment

In employment land use designations, Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the assumed density factor instead of dwellings/acre. FAR is a measure of the intensity of non-residential development that compares the total building square footage on a parcel to its acreage. The higher the FAR the more intense the use. For example, a 10,000 square foot building on a 1.0 acre (43,560 s.f.) parcel would have a FAR of 0.23.

For the Little Blue Valley FARs of 0.20 to 0.25 were used to determine the cumulative results for the employment categories of each alternative. These FARs are typical intensities for suburban office and business parks or industrial parks. Such developments typically consist of one to three story buildings with surface parking often in a campus-like setting with

some open space or edge buffers and setbacks. For the Town Centers and Village Centers, whose acreage is not listed separately, such calculations were replaced by assigned buildout square footage of development.

5.E Concept Alternative 1: Existing Comprehensive Plan

Alternative 1, the No Change alternative (see Figure 9) is the current City of Independence Comprehensive and Thoroughfare Plan adopted in July 1993. Table 3 summarizes its distribution of land use designations within the Little Blue Valley Study Area.

TABLE 3:
1993 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATIONS
Little Blue Valley Study Area

Designation	Acres (1)	% of Total
Agricultural	9,270	38.7%
Agricultural/Underground	129	0.5%
Low Density Residential	5,160	21.5%
Medium Density Residential	228	1.0%
High Density Residential	61	0.3%
Commercial	55	0.2%
Regional Commercial	36	0.1%
Office	37	0.2%
Business Park	136	0.6%
Light Industrial	2,441	10.2%
Industrial Park	2,199	9.2%
Open Space	2,178	9.1%
Public Parks	1,803	7.5%
Public Facilities	225	0.9%
Total	**23,957**	**100.0%**

(1) Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence.

As Table 3 shows, the No Change alternative designates approximately 22 percent of the study area for low-density residential. Half of this low-density residential is now being developed between 39th Street and Strode Road east of the Little Blue River. The area from Jones Road to the east of Powell Road, now primarily developed with farming and a few residences, would be future low-density residential development. The lack of road infrastructure, mainly the existing two-lane street system presently limits growth in this area. The area east of the Little Blue River, south of Eureka Road, along R.D. Mize Road and north of 39th Street (Pink Hill Road) is the only area recommended for low-density single-family residential development except for the portion from Jones Road to east of Powell Road.

Agricultural land after harvest

Rock out-cropping

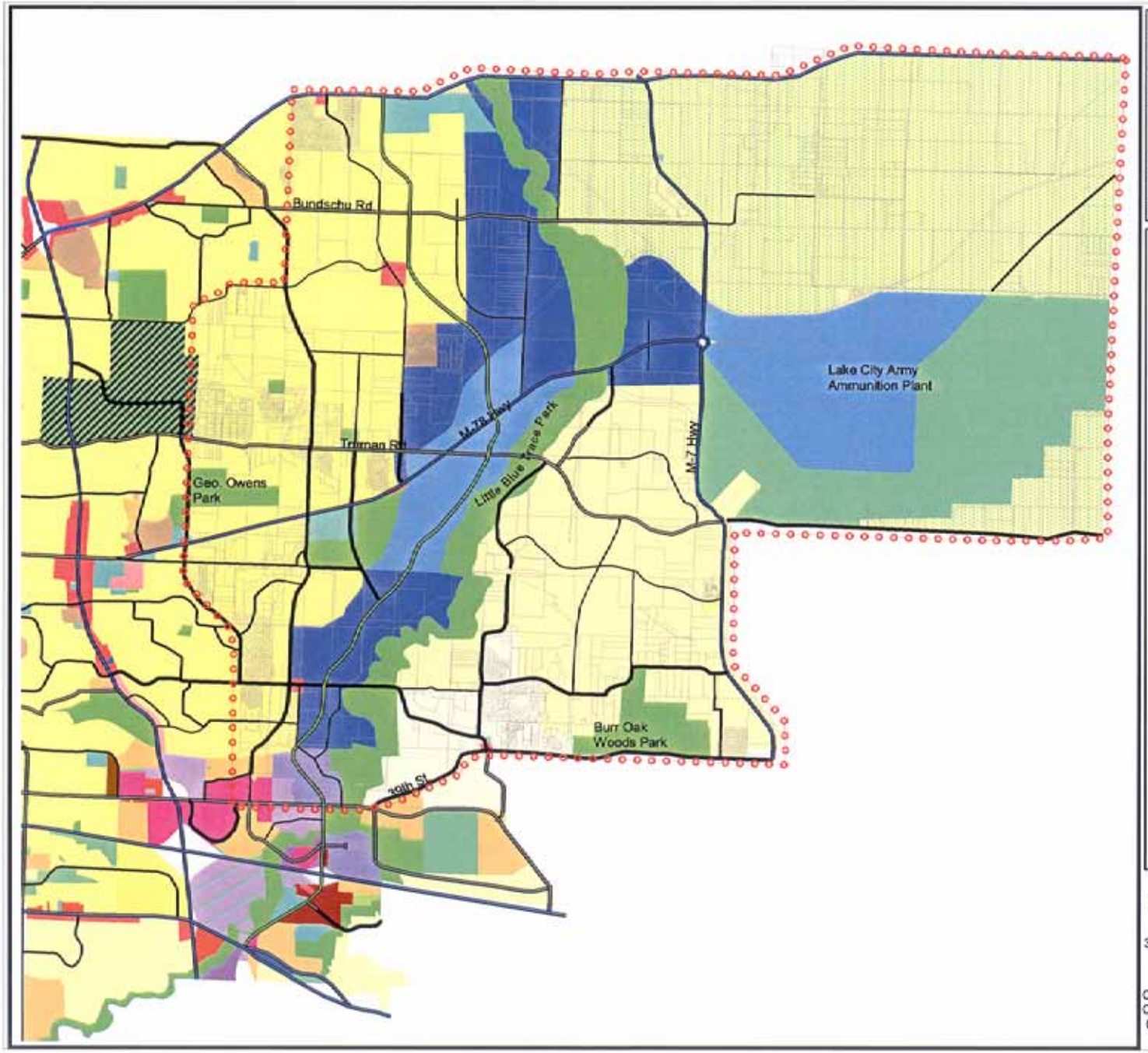

Figure 9:
Concept Alternative 1
Existing Comprehenisve and Thoroughfare Plan
Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment

LEGEND

Thoroughfare Plan
- Highway
- Highway to be Upgraded
- Little Blue Parkway
- Arterials
- Arterials Planned
- Arterials to be Upgraded
- Minor Arterials
- Minor Arterials Planned
- Minor Arterials Upgraded
- Collector
- Collector Planned
- Collector to be Upgraded
- Parcels

Existing Comprehensive Plan
- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Estate Density Residential
- Low Denisty Residential
- Low Medium Density Residential
- MediumDeinsity Residential
- High Density Residential
- Mixed Use
- Low Density Commercial
- Commercial
- Local Commercial
- Regional Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Office
- Office Park
- Private Recreation/Office
- Business/Industrial Park
- Business Park
- Industrial Park
- Light Industrial
- Open Space
- Open Space/Industrial Reserve
- Open Space/Underground
- Public Parks
- Private Recreation
- Public /Semi Public Facilities
- Boundary of Study Area

Date: May, 1999

N

3000 0 3000 6000 Feet

Community Development Dept.
City of Independence, MO.
Geographic Information System, (G.I.S.)

Because of its proximity to cargo rail lines and Interstate 70 and because the topography varies less than 3 percent in slope, the existing Comprehensive Plan proposes extensive light industrial and business park development in the Little Blue River Valley. The current Comprehensive Plan assumes the proposed Little Blue Parkway will provide the principal access for regional industrial traffic by connecting the study area to I-70 at Selsa Road and to a proposed perimeter parkway along the Missouri River leading into downtown Kansas City. The current light industrial designation explicitly permits agricultural production as an interim use until the market for industrial development materializes.

Table 4 shows the holding capacity of the vacant land within the study area according to the 1993 Comprehensive Plan land-use designations.

Land planned for industrial use in the 1993 Land Use Plan. This land at M-78 and Truman Road is now planned as mixed use.

TABLE 4:
CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE 1 (1993 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN) HOLDING CAPACITY
Little Blue Valley Study Area

Designation	Vacant Gross Acres (1)	% of Total	Holding Capacity(2)*		
			Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Agricultural	8,405	52.8%	1,428		0.2 du/ac
Agricultural/Underground	114	0.7%			
Low Density Residential	3,476	21.8%	4,432		1.5 du/ac
Medium Density Residential	90	0.6%	229		3.0 du/ac
High Density Residential	14	0.1%	115		10.0 du/ac
Commercial	36	0.2%		332,907	0.25 du/ac
Regional Commercial	29	0.2%		268,050	0.25du/ac
Office	36	0.2%		534,425	0.40 du/ac
Business Park	127	0.8%		1,177,989	0.25 du/ac
Light Industrial	2,098	13.2%		19,421,148	0.25 du/ac
Industrial Park	718	4.5%		6,643,415	0.25 du/ac
Open Space	45	0.3%			
Public Parks	533	3.3%			
Public Facilities	190	1.2%			
Total	**15,910**	**100.0%**	**6,204**	**28,377,934**	

(1) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence.

(2) Assumes net developable land at 85 percent of gross acreage.

Comparison of Table 4 to the estimates of potential market absorption in Table 1 reveals two critical findings about the capacity of the current Comprehensive Plan. First, at 6,200 dwelling units, the residential holding capacity falls short of meeting the potential absorption through year 2020 of 7,100 units. Second, the supply of vacant industrial land (more than 2,800 acres) far exceeds the estimated 2040 demand (150 acres).

These findings suggest the need to match more closely the supply of developable land to the estimated market absorption demand. Correcting the shortfall in

residentially designated land can occur by designating more of the agricultural land for development or by increasing residential densities on land most suitable for residential development.

Given the dramatic oversupply of industrial land, another tactic is to convert some of the land designated for industrial uses to residential designations. Such re-designations will establish a more balanced land supply and increase the ability of Independence to attract high-quality development to the Little Blue Valley.

Because the City is quite concerned about preserving an adequate supply of industrial/employment land (particularly important in creating positive fiscal results), any alternative plan must achieve a balance between employment and residential development and care must be used in the location of such uses.

Truman Road just East of M-291 is to be upgraded to a four lane Boulevard-type cross-section

5.F Concept Alternative 2

Alternative 2 (see Figure 10) sets forth a more balanced mixture and a different distribution of land uses than the 1993 Comprehensive Plan. Alternative 2 also features concentration of density around subcenters. Under Alternative 2, a new Town Center is located east of the Little Blue River in the southeastern quadrant of the study area. Truman Boulevard, upgraded, would serve as the gateway to the new Town Center.

5.F.1 Roadway Network: The Little Blue Parkway would be developed as a limited access parkway in accord with the Major Investment Study (MIS) alignment. Truman Road would be upgraded to a boulevard configuration and extend to the Town Center east of the River. Jackson Drive would follow the City's current thoroughfare plan alignment from U.S. 24 Highway south, but stop at R.D. Mize Road.

5.F.2 Land Use Mix and Development Approach

5.F.2.1 Business/Industrial Park: Business/industrial parks are concentrated in three locations:

1. At the northeastern corner of the Little Blue Parkway and R.D. Mize Road;

2. Along Truman Boulevard north and south of the City's power plant; and

3. Immediately to the west of the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant, on both the north and south sides of M-78.

5.F.2.2 Heavy Industrial: Heavy industrial users would be directed to land within the Lake City Army Ammunition facility. The current munitions contract holder is actively marketing these sites for industrial uses.

5.F.2.3 Commercial: Commercial offices would concentrate at the southwestern edge of the Study Area, along the Little Blue Parkway north of the Selsa Road/I-70 Interchange and south of R.D. Mize Road. The Town Center would contain retail commercial uses and there would also be commercial development at some or all of the six Village Centers.

5.F.2.4 Residential: Alternative 2 proposes residential development at three density levels: medium density around the Town Center and to the west of the river in the northwestern quadrant; low/medium density south of the Town Center; and estate density in the northeastern quadrant and rural residential. The estate density in the northeastern quadrant is based mainly on existing zoning and assumes a fairly slow build-out (Table 2).

5.F.2.5 Open Space and Parks: The Little Blue River Open Space Corridor with its mature stands of trees, trail system, and active and passive park and recreation opportunities are

the spine of an extensive open space network that is a central feature of all the new plan alternatives. Alternative 2 would provide approximately 2,500 acres of parkland and another 4,700 acres set aside as open space. This system would include a network of bicycle and pedestrian trails. While this trail network will be an important recreational facility, it will also permit some home-to-work non-auto commuting and give people an alternative means to move easily between commercial and residential areas and the various attractions of the open space and park system.

In addition to the main north-south open space corridor, east-west linkages are also part of the open space system shown on the plan.

Table 5 summarizes the total acreage and proportion of the total study area of the land use designations under Alternative 2.

The Little Blue River will provide a spine for future open space corridors

TABLE 5: CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE 2 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS Little Blue Valley Study Area		
Designation	Acreage (1)	% of Total
Ag/Rural Residential	5,116	21.2%
Estate Residential	317	1.3%
Low Residential	5,193	21.5%
Low/Medium Residential	2,930	12.1%
Medium Residential	227	0.9%
Village Center	50	.002%
Mixed Use	141	0.6%
Business/Industrial Park	1,266	5.2%
Light Industrial	1,182	4.9%
Commercial Office	188	0.8%
Institutional/Public Facilities	331	1.4%
Public/Quasi-Public Parks	2,467	10.2%
Open Space	4,777	19.8%
Total	24,185	100.0%

(1) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence but refined and adjusted by LDR International, Inc.

Table 6 shows the holding capacity of the vacant land within the study area according to Alternative 2. This capacity was calculated by applying the assumed development factors (i.e., residential density or floor-area ratio) shown in Table 6 to currently vacant and/or agricultural land.

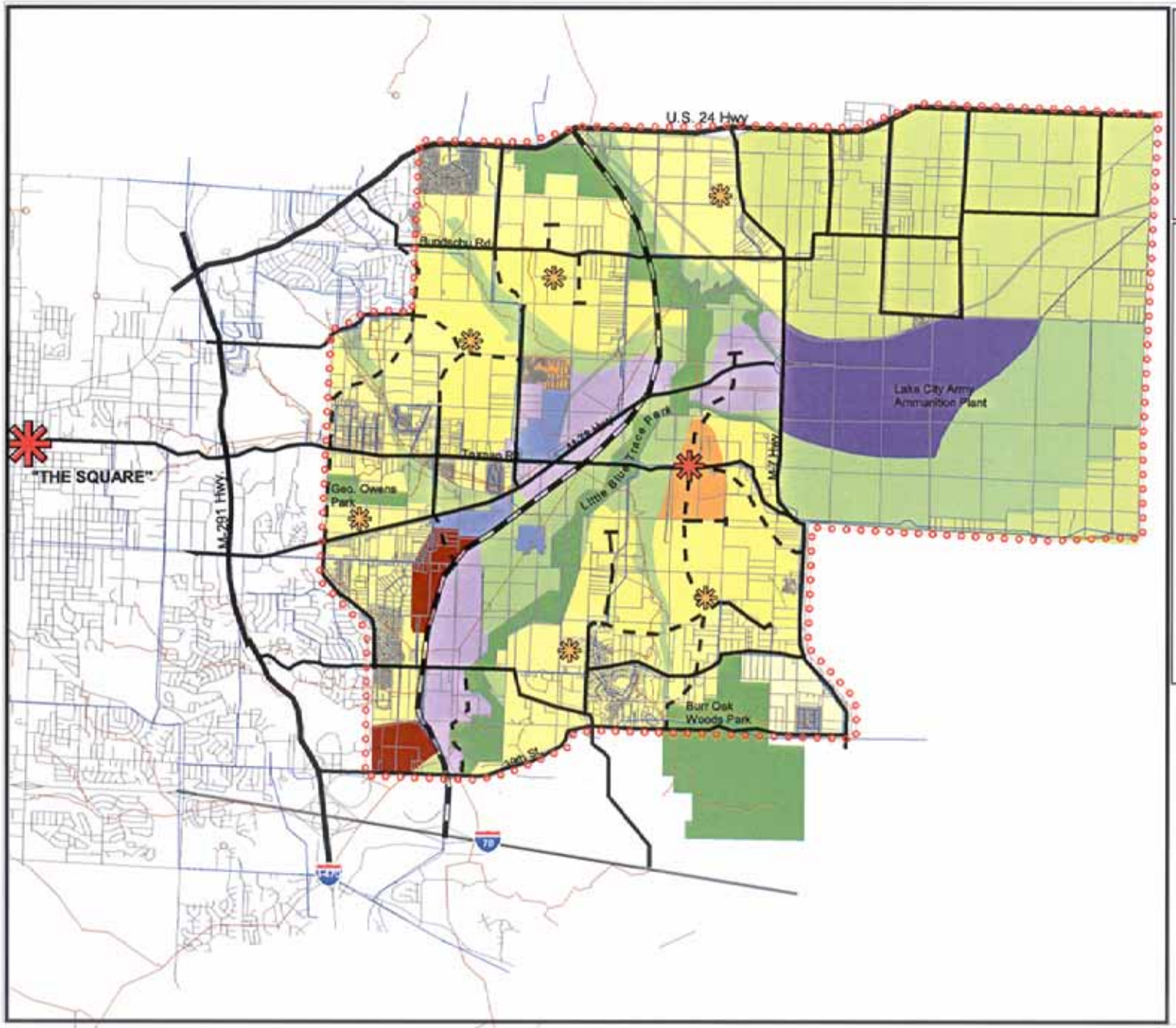

Figure 10: Concept Alternative 2 Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment

LEGEND:

- Highways
- Existing Streets
- Proposed Streets
- Water Lines
- Sewers
- Parcels
- Streets
- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Estate Desity Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Low/Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- General Mixed Use
- Industrial Park
- Industrial
- Institutional/Public Facilities
- Open Space
- Public/Quasi Public/Park Land
- Village Center
- Town Center

Date: May, 1999

N

3000 0 3000 6000 9000 Feet

Community Development Dept.
City of Independence, MO.
Geographic Information System, (G.I.S.)

TABLE 6: CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE 2 HOLDING CAPACITY Little Blue Valley Study Area					
Designation	Vacant Gross Acres (1)	% of Total	Holding Capacity(2)		
			Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	4,784	31.4%	810		0.2 du/ac
Estate Density Residential	227	1.5%	290		1.5 du/ac
Low Density Residential	3,074	20.2%	7,840		3.0 du/ac
Low/Medium Density Residential	2,728	17.9%	11,590		5.0 du/ac
Medium Density Residential	340	2.2%	2,890		10.0 du/ac
Town Center	50	0.3%		463,000	0.25 far
Village Centers	0	0	0	400,000	0.25 far
Mixed Use	235	1.5%	250	1,958,000	0.30 far
Business/Industrial Park	1,318	8.6%		9,757,000	0.20 far
Light Industrial	85	0.6%		626,000	0.20 far
Institutional/Public Facilities	224	1.5%			
Public/Quasi-Public Parks	446	2.9%			
Open Space	1,723	11.3%			
Total	15,234	100.0%	23,670	13,204,000	

(1) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence.

(2) Assumes net developable land at 85 percent of gross acreage.

A comparison of Table 6 with the estimates of potential market absorption presented in Table 1 reveals that Alternative 2 would provide more than enough developable land to meet the assumed demand.

With a total holding capacity of approximately 23,000 dwelling units and assuming an average household size of 2.8 persons, Alternative 2 could support a residential population of 64,400. This substantially exceeds the estimated 2040 population (40,000 residents) of the market study.

Future Alignment of the Little Blue Parkway looking north from the Kansas City Southern rail line just north of 39th Street

Alternative 2 would provide sufficient supply for all non-residential land development categories. The combined retail capacity of the Town Center, the Village Centers, and the mixed-use area (1.66 million square feet) would be more than twice the estimated market demand. The employment designated land would also result in a similar oversupply, but the excess is far less than under the existing Comprehensive Plan. An over supply of nonresidential land will allow economic development opportunities well beyond the planning horizon. The Commercial Office designation would yield a total of approximately 1.8 million square feet, exceeding estimated absorption demand by approximately 400,000 square feet.

5.G Concept Alternative 3

Alternative 3 (see Figure 11) proposes a mixture of uses similar to Alternative 2, but with a slightly different distribution and proportion of those uses. Like Alternative 2, it anticipates concentration around subcenters. In Alternative 3, the proposed new Town Center is west of the Little Blue River with direct access from the Little Blue Parkway.

5.G.1 Roadway Network: The Little Blue Parkway would follow a different alignment from the MIS alignment and is envisioned to be more like a "parkway" than the expressway design of Alternative 2. Truman Boulevard is upgraded, but merges with M-78 Highway and terminates at M-7 Highway at the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant. Jackson Drive generally follows the alignment previously designated on the 1993 master plan but terminates at R.D Mize Road from the north.

5.G.2 Land Use Mix And Development Approach

5.G.2.1 Business/Light Industrial Park: Under Alternative 3, business/industrial parks are concentrated in two locations: along Truman Boulevard north and south of the City's power plant; and on both the north and south sides of M-78 immediately to the west of the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant. The amount of land designated for Business/Industrial Park under Alternative 3 is less than Alternative 2 with approximately 350 acres of employment land in Alternative 2 shifted to Mixed-Use in Alternative 3.

5.G.2.2 Commercial: Commercial office designations are at the southwestern corner of the Study Area, along the Little Blue Parkway north of the Selsa Road/I-70 Interchange and south of R.D. Mize Road. The Town Center will contain retail commercial uses and there may also be some commercial development at the Village Centers.

5.G.2.3 Residential: Alternative 3 shows four levels of residential density within the study area: highest density to the west of the Little Blue River in the northeastern part of the Study Area; next highest densities east of the river in the southeastern quadrant; and lowest density in the far northeast. This alternative calls for a more aggressive approach to developing the northeast quadrant. Slightly higher density would be allowed in exchange for infrastructure improvements. Cluster development would be encouraged as a development option.

5.G.2.4 Heavy Industrial: As in Alternative 2, it is assumed that industrial development would concentrate on existing facilities and land within the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant project.

5.G.2.5 Open Space and Parks: As under Alternative 2, the Little Blue River Open Space Corridor is the spine of an extensive open space

Little Blue Trace Park north of Truman Road

network, with approximately 2,500 acres designated as parkland and another 4,500 set aside as open space. As with Alternative 2, east-west open space linkages would tie into the major north-south corridor along the river.

Alternative 3 results in a slightly lower amount of open space because of the changed alignment of the Little Blue Parkway. Under Alternative 3, the parkway is aligned closer to the Little Blue River, resulting in a narrower band of open space between the road and the river.

As under Alternative 2, a series of pedestrian and bicycle trails would provide opportunities for both recreational and commute travel, as well as providing access to the Little Blue Valley's open space and parks.

Table 7 summarizes the acreage and proportion of the total area of the land use designations under Alternative 3.

Bike trail along the Little Blue Parkway.

TABLE 7: CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE 3 LAND USE DESIGNATIONS Little Blue Valley Study Area		
Designation	**Acres**	**% of Total**
Ag/Rural Residential	500	2.1%
Estate Density Residential	4,932	20.3%
Low Residential	5,219	21.5%
Low/Medium Residential	3,279	13.5%
Medium Residential	205	0.8%
Village Center	50	0.2%
Mixed Use	492	2.0%
Business/Industrial Park	940	3.9%
Industrial	1,185	4.9%
Commercial Office	199	0.8%
Institutional/Public Facilities	291	1.2%
Public/Quasi-Public Parks	2,462	10.1%
Open Space	4,537	18.7%
Total	**24,291**	**100.0%**

(1) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence.

A comparison of Table 8 with the estimates of potential market absorption presented in Table 1 reveals that Alternative 3 would provide more than enough developable land to meet the demand assumed in Table 1.

With a total holding capacity of almost 30,000 dwelling units and assuming an average household size of 2.8 persons, Alternative 3 would support a residential population of more than 80,000. This would substantially exceed both the estimated population (40,000 residents) of the market demand study and the residential holding capacity of Alternative 2 (approximately 64,400 residents).

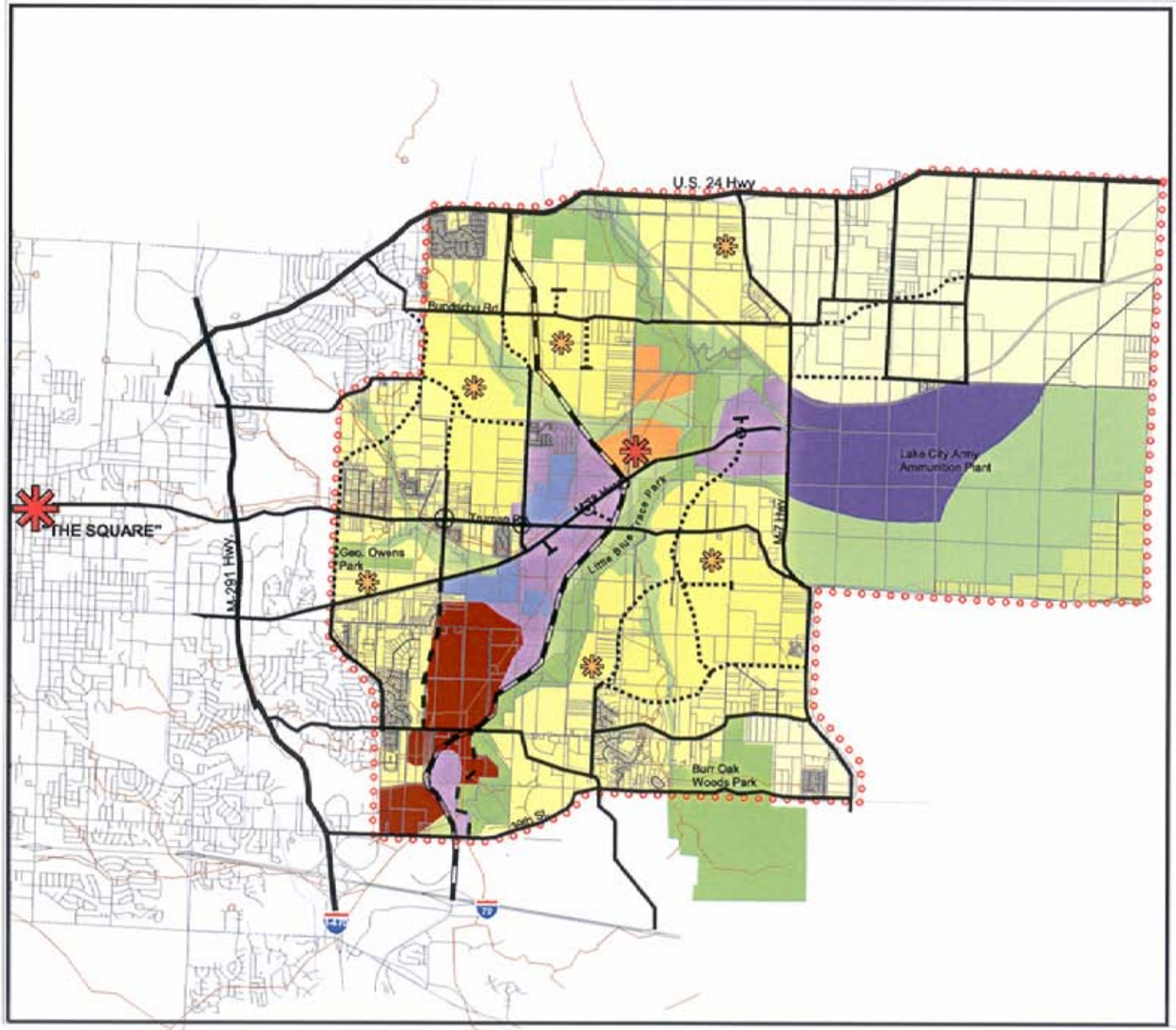

Figure 11: Concept Alternative 3 Little Blue Valley Comprehensive Plan Amendment

LEGEND:

- Highways
- Existing Streets
- Proposed Streets
- Water Mains
- Sewers
- Streets
- Parcels

Land Use-Alt 3

- Agricultural/Rural Residential
- Estate Desity Residential
- Low Density Residential
- Low/Medium Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- General Mixed Use
- Business/Industrial Park
- Industrial
- Institutional/Public Facilities
- Open Space
- Public/Quasi Public/Park Land
- Village Center
- Town Center
- Proposed Round-a-Bout/Circles

Date: May, 1999

N

3000 0 3000 6000 9000 Feet

Community Development Dept.
City of Independence, MO.
Geographic Information System, (G.I.S.)

Alternative 3 would also provide a sufficient supply of all non-residential development categories. At well over 4.0 million square feet, the combined retail capacity of the Town Center, the Village Centers, and the mixed-use areas would far exceed the estimated retail demand, as well as the amount of retail development possible under Alternative 2.

The employment designated land also provides more square footage than necessary according to the absorption estimates, but this oversupply is smaller than under Alternative 2 and dramatically smaller than the 1993 Comprehensive Plan. The Commercial Office designation would yield a total of approximately 1.9 million square feet, which exceeds estimated demand by approximately 500,000 square feet.

TABLE 8:
CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE 3 HOLDING CAPACITY
Little Blue Valley Study Area

Designation	Vacant Gross Acres(1)	% of Total	Holding Capacity(2)*		
			Dwelling Units	Square Footage	Assumed Density/FAR
Ag/Rural Residential	384	2.5%	70		0.2
Estate Density Residential	4,652	29.9%	5,930		1.5
Low Density Residential	3,416	22.0%	8,710		3.0
Low/Medium Density Residential	2,996	19.3%	12,730		5.0
Medium Density Residential	204	1.3%	1,730		10.0
Town Center	50	0.3%		463,000	0.25
Village Centers				400,000	0.25
Mixed Use	421	2.7%	450	3,504,000	0.30
Business/Industrial Park	821	5.3%		6,083,000	0.20
Light Industrial	77	0.5%		574,000	0.20
Commercial Office	173	1.1%		1,923,000	0.30
Institutional/Public Facilities	221	1.4%			
Public/Quasi-Public Parks	446	2.9%			
Open Space	1,692	10.9%			
Total	**15,553**	**100.0%**	**29,620**	**12,947,000**	

(1) Vacant Gross Acres are approximate and are GIS (Geographic Information System) calculations based on July 1998 data supplied by the City of Independence.

(2) Assumes net developable land at 85 percent of gross acreage.

5.H Review of Alternative Plans

During the week of August 24, 1998, the City conducted a series of presentations and extensive public discussions about the three alternative plans. In addition to general review of the three alternatives, feedback was gained regarding the following specific issues:

- Little Blue Parkway alternative alignments
- Town Center concept
- Town Center alternative locations
- Village Center concept
- Village Center locations
- General location of uses
- Quantity of uses
- Options for the N.E. quadrant of the study area

Participants in these discussions generally:

- Favored the Little Blue Parkway alignment in Alternative 3.
- Liked the Town Center and Village Center concepts.
- Were nevertheless concerned about Town Center competing with the "Square."
- Questioned the number of proposed Village Centers.
- Wished to retain the rural character of the northeast quadrant of the study area.
- Favored allowing a range of housing choices and lot sizes.
- Supported the open space and trail proposals
- Called for publicity about the draft plan prior to future meetings.

In addition to the above comments, which were mainly subjective responses to the three scenarios, the alternatives were considered relative to the goals established in Chapter 4 of this plan update. Consequently, the concepts were evaluated on the basis of how well they achieved the goals.

Alignment of the Little Blue Parkway north of Necessary Road